

## S E R M O N S

O N T H E

C R E A T I O N, F A L L,

A N D

R E D E M P T I O N o f M A N;

And on the

Sacrifices of *Cain* and *Abel*, the Re-  
jection and Punishment of *Cain*.

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By *HENRY FELTON*, D.D. KLate Principal of *Edmund Hall* in *Oxford*,Author of the *Dissertation on the CLASSICKS*.

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## P R E E A C E.

Y Father having composed the following Discourses in Pursuance of a Plan settled between him and Dr. *Waterland*, which they both promised to execute; he intended to have them revised by his learned Friend, before they should appear in Publick. In his last Illness he gave me these, with the rest of his Compositions, without any particular Charge to publish them, only saying, that he did not think the Sermons which he had left upon the Resurrection, or any other preached before the University, were fit to be published. As to these Discourses, he had before frequently acquainted me with his Intention, that they should be made publick: I had no Opportunity of shewing them to Dr. *Waterland*, but at last determined to publish them,

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upon

upon the repeated Advice of a worthy and learned Person, whose Sincerity and Judgment I had the greatest Reason to confide in. I shall now comply with Custom, in giving the Reader some further Information concerning the Author, and the Work which I publish: Dr. *Henry Felton*, the Author of these Discourses, was the eldest Son of *John Felton*, born *February 3, 1679.* in the Parish of *St. Martin in the Fields*, where his Baptism is registered; his Grandfather was *Timothy Felton*, Esq; of *Felton in Northumberland*, after seated at *Ovington in Essex*, and related to those of his Name in the County of *Suffolk*. The Author was bred first at *Cheneys in Buckinghamshire*, afterwards at *Westminster-School*, under the celebrated Dr. *Busby*; from thence he was removed to the *Charterhouse*, in which last Place he was under the peculiar Care of Dr. *Walker*, the then worthy Master of that School, rather as a Pupil in his House,

# P R E F A C E. v

House, than as a Scholar in the School. He was admitted Commoner in *Edmund Hall* in *Oxford* when Dr. *Mill* was Principal; his Tutor was Mr. *Mills*, afterwards Bishop of *Waterford*: He took the Degree of Master of Arts while he was a Member of the Hall, *June 5, 1702.* and was ordained Deacon on *Sunday December 6, 1702.* by *William* Bishop of *Worcester*, in the Royal Chapel at *Whitehall*. He was admitted to the holy Order of Priesthood on *Sunday June 11, 1704.* by *Henry* Bishop of *London*, in his Chapel at *Fulham*. In 1708. he had the Care of the *English Church* at *Amsterdam*, and soon after his Return into *England* 1709. he was made domestick Chaplain to the Duke of *Rutland* at *Belvoir Castle*, and was Chaplain to the three Dukes successively; and he always retained the most grateful Sense of the Favours he received from those great Persons, and expressed the warmest Affection for that noble

A 3                      Family.

Family. He took the Degree of Batchelor in Divinity *July 11, 1709.* being then a Member of *Queen's College.* In *1711.* he was presented to the Rectory of *Whitwell* in *Derbyshire,* in the Duke of *Rutland's* Patronage; he proceeded in the Degree of Doctor in Divinity *July 4, 1712.* Upon the Death of *Dr. Pearson* *1722.* he was admitted, by the Provost and Fellows of *Queen's College,* Principal of *Edmund Hall.* In *1736.* he was presented to the Rectory of *Berwic* in *Elmet,* by his Grace the present Duke of *Rutland,* who was Patron of that Living, as Chancellor of the Dutchy of *Lancaster.* In *October 1739.* he was seized with a rheumatick Disorder, and, after a long Confinement, he was so well recovered, that he thought himself able to officiate in his Church at *Berwic* on *Christmas Day,* when he preached his last Sermon; and tho' he was greatly weakened by his long Illness, he exerted himself in  
his

his Discourse, and spoke with his usual Fervour and Affection. Having taken Cold, he was soon disordered with a Defluxion, attended with a violent Fever; he was very sensible of his approaching Change, and made the necessary Preparation for it, and behaved, under his long and painful Sickneſs, with a Reſignation and Piety becoming a Chriſtian, and agreeable to his Character as a Miniſter of *Jeſus Chriſt*. He prayed with the greateſt Fervency, with an humble and contrite Heart; he put his whole Truſt in the Merits of his Saviour *Jeſus Chriſt*, and declared his Faith, that in him he had Redemption through his Blood, even the Forgiveneſs of Sins. When he was too weak for Utterance, it was viſible that he was continually lifting up his Heart to God; and he had before ſignified by Writing, that his laſt Prayers would be to commend his Spirit unto God, and deſired others, upon the Approach of his Change, to pray for the

safe and happy Departure of his Soul. Thus he died in the Faith, *March 1, 1739.* being a few Weeks advanced into the Sixty-first Year of his Life. He was interred in the Chancel of the Church of *Berwic*, within the Communion-rails. According to his Desire there is no Epitaph or Inscription upon his Grave.

What remains, is further to give a short Account of the Time when these Discourses were begun, and where they were delivered, with a few Lines concerning the Author. He composed these Sermons about the Year 1730. and preached them in his Parish-Church at *Whitwell* in that and the following Year; and in 1733. he enlarged them, and delivered them again in the same Church. In 1736. being removed to the Rectory of *Berwic*, he transcribed and preached them there in that and the following Year. I have mentioned these Circumstances to shew that these were not hasty Compositions, having been so long under the Author's Hand,  
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and being greatly improved since the first Draught of them; and these Discourses may be the more acceptable, as there is at least something new in the Performance. The Character of the Author, as a Writer, is well known; he distinguished himself early by his *Dissertation on reading the Classics, and forming a just Style*, addressed to his Grace the present Duke of Rutland; of which Work it is needless for me to say any Thing, since it hath been so long received with general Approbation. And since, as a Preacher, he met with good Acceptance, both in the University, and in popular Audiences; it is presumed that this Work will not be unacceptable to the Publick. I may add, that these Discourses have this Advantage, that they were written at a Time when his Judgment was in full Maturity, and his Mind improved by a long Acquaintance with the best Authors; and I hope that they will not be found unequal to the rest of his

his Performances, nor inferior to the Style and Spirit with which he wrote so successfully in his younger Years. Yet there is Reason to bespeak the Reader's Candour; for Authors, as well as Men, are imperfect; and no one was ever more sensible of his Imperfections than this Author, or a more candid Judge of the Writings of others, or a more kind Interpreter of their Actions. He was the farthest from expressing any Thing which might look like Rudeness, or Incivility; his Language was, on all Occasions, polite and agreeable, and always shewed that good Manners which is the Mark of good Breeding, good Sense, and Christian Courtesy. He hath shewed a perfect Mastery of the *English* Tongue, both in the Force and Purity of his Diction; and his Style was always suitable to his Subject. He managed the argumentative Part with the greatest Clearness and Accuracy, and Propriety of Expression; his Sentences were plain  
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and grave, where Ornament was not required, and upon proper Occasions he rose into a Majesty of Style, and was elevated with his Subject, especially when he discoursed upon the sublime Topicks of Scripture. He wrote with the greatest Ease, Freedom, and Fluency, and was, at the same Time, correct, perspicuous, and happy in his Expressions: He had a Command of his Subject, and of proper Words to cloath his Thoughts in: He had the Art of forming the several Parts of his Discourse in the most natural Order, and easy Connexion, and finished the Whole with Elegance, Strength, and Spirit. His Elocution in the Pulpit was grave and harmonious, and wanted not a just Energy; and his Subjects were so well chosen, and important, that his Sermons carried a Weight and Authority which became a Preacher of the Gospel. He was a zealous Defender of the Truth of Christianity, and of its sound Doctrines, against  
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those who either meant to overthrow or corrupt it; and he answered their Objections and their Scoffs with superior Force of Argument and Wit. I must not omit to mention, that he read Prayers in the most proper Manner, and delighted to perform that Office: He read with such graceful Solemnity and Devotion, as set off the Beauty of our excellent *Liturgy*, and expressed the Spirit of Piety with which it is animated. During the whole Course of his Studies in Divinity he particularly applied himself to the great Subject of the *Resurrection*, and he hath drawn out the pure and genuine Doctrine from the Scriptures, and vindicated and illustrated it with the clearest Arguments; and he shewed at last, that his Hope was, like his Reasonings, full of Immortality.

Having given this Account of the Author and the Work, I pray that the Blessing of God may attend the Publication of it, that so it may answer

the Intention with which it was undertaken, by affording a right Instruction in the Scriptures therein explained, especially in that great Article the Redemption of Mankind; and by fixing the practical Applications upon the Hearts of the Readers. It most especially concerns those who are set apart for the sacred Ministry of the Word, to have a right Judgment in the Scriptures, which are the Fountain from which we are to draw the Knowledge of divine Things: We must therefore be careful to take up the Waters pure as they rise, and not to mix and sully them with human Pollutions; and to follow no Streams which do not flow from that heavenly Spring. And God hath promised his holy Spirit to them that ask it, which being the Spirit of Truth, will always, where he dwells, prevent any Delusion from the Spirit of Error. Those, therefore, should not fail to ask this Wisdom of God, who are obliged to be faithful Guides  
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in the Way which leadeth to Life. Tho' all Christians be called *the Salt of the Earth, and the Light of the World*, yet these are Metaphors more eminently significant of the Character and Duty of those who are to preach the Word, and to carry the Light of the Gospel before others: They are required not only to be Teachers, but Examples of Righteousness; and not to seek their own Ease and Profit, but to be content to labour, and to suffer Reproach for the Sake of the Gospel, that they may save themselves and those that hear them; and they will be supported by the Grace of God in doing the Work which he requires, and enjoy the Testimony of his Acceptance of them.

Highgate,  
May 5,  
1748.

William Felton.

28 SE60





A  
T A B L E  
OF THE  
SUBJECTS and TEXTS.



S E R M O N I.

On the Creation of Man in the Image  
of God.

GENESIS i. 27.

*So God created Man in his own Image: In the  
Image of God created he him: Male and Fe-  
male created he them.*

Page I

S E R M O N II.

On the Transgression, and the Nature  
and Fitness of the Law or Prohi-  
bition given to our first Parents con-  
sidered.

G E N.

## A TABLE of Subjects and Texts.

GEN. iii. 9, 10, 11.

*And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?*

*And he said, I heard thy Voice in the Garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.*

*And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the Tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? p. 23*

### S E R M O N III, IV, V, VI.

On GENESIS iii. 15.

Containing an Explication of the several Sentences pronounced upon the Serpent, the Woman and the Man, and of the Mercy of God in the Promise of the Woman's Seed which should bruise the Serpent's Head.

GEN. iii. 15.

*I will put Enmity between thee and the Woman, and between thy Seed and her Seed: It shall bruise thy Head, and thou shalt bruise his Heel.*

P. 45

S E R M O N



*A TABLE of the Subjects and Texts.*

S E R M O N IV.

Who the Tempter was, and of the  
Enmity between him and his Seed,  
and the Woman and her Seed.

GEN. iii. 15.

*I will put Enmity between thee and the Woman,  
and between thy Seed and her Seed: It shall  
bruise thy Head, and thou shalt bruise his  
Heel.*

p. 69

S E R M O N V.

*Jesus*, the promised Seed of the Wo-  
man, described in the several Pro-  
phesies of a Saviour.

GEN. iii. 15.

*—It shall bruise thy Head, and thou shalt  
bruise his Heel.*

p. 93

S E R M O N VI.

The Victory of the promised Seed over  
the great Enemy.

*A TABLE of the Subjects and Texts.*

GEN. iii. 15.

*—It shall bruise thy Head, and thou shalt bruise  
his Heel.*

P. 111

S E R M O N VII.

The free Grace and Mercy of God in  
the Redemption of Mankind by the  
promised Seed; with the due Use  
and Improvement of the Doctrine.

ROM. iii. 23, 24.

*For All have sinned, and come short of the Glory  
of God;  
Being justified freely by his Grace, through the  
Redemption that is in Jesus Christ.*

P. 131

S E R M O N VIII.

On the original Uprightness in which  
Man was created, and the Depra-  
vity of his Nature introduced by  
the Fall.

ECCLESIASTES vii. 29.

*—God hath made Man upright, but they have  
sought out many Inventions.*

P. 155

S E R M O N

*A TABLE of the Subjects and Texts.*

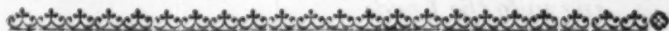
S E R M O N IX.

On the Depravity of Men in their Inventions since the Fall.

ECCLES. vii. 29.

—God hath made Man upright, but they have sought out many Inventions.

p. 171



S E R M O N S on the History  
of *Cain* and *Abel*.

S E R M O N I.

On the History of *Cain* and *Abel*; of  
the Institution of Sacrifices.

GEN. iv. 3, 4, 5.

*And in Process of Time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the Fruit of the Ground an Offering unto the Lord.*

*And Abel, he also brought of the Firslings of his Flock, and of the Fat thereof. And the Lord had Respect unto Abel, and to his Offering:*

*A TABLE of the Subjects and Texts.*

*But unto Cain, and to his Offering, he had not Respect.* p. 187

S E R M O N II.

On the Sacrifices of *Cain* and *Abel*.

GEN. iv. 3, 4, 5.

*And in Process of Time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the Fruit of the Ground an Offering unto the Lord.*

*And Abel, he also brought of the Firstlings of his Flock, and of the Fat thereof. And the Lord had Respect unto Abel, and to his Offering:*

*But unto Cain, and to his Offering, he had not Respect.* p. 201

S E R M O N III.

The different Acceptance of the Offerings of *Cain* and *Abel*.

GEN. iv. 4, 5.

— *And the Lord had Respect unto Abel, and to his Offering:*

*But unto Cain, and to his Offering, he had not Respect.* p. 217

S E R M O N

*A TABLE of the Subjects and Texts,*

S E R M O N IV.

On the Anger and Resentment of *Cain*  
upon the Rejection of his Offering,  
and the Acceptance of *Abel's*.

GEN. iv. 5, 6, 7.

—*And Cain was very wroth, and his Countenance fell.*

*And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? And why is thy Countenance fallen?*

*If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?*

*And if thou doest not well, Sin lieth at the Door. And unto thee shall be his Desire, and thou shalt rule over him.*

P. 231

S E R M O N V.

The Folly and Wickedness of Anger  
and Impatience, and the Duty of  
Submission and Repentance to God.

GEN. iv. 5.

—*And Cain was very wroth, and his Countenance fell.*

P. 247

S E R M O N

*A TABLE of the Subjects and Texts.*

E R M O N VI.

God's Expostulation with *Cain* upon his Anger, and the Means of regaining the divine Favour pointed out to him in the Terms of Acceptance.

GEN. iv. 6, 7.

*And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? And why is thy Countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, Sin lieth at the Door. And unto thee shall be his Desire, and thou shalt rule over him.* p. 261

S E R M O N VII.

God's Arraignment of *Cain* for the Murder of *Abel*, and *Cain's* rude and irreverent Behaviour.

GEN. iv. 9, 10, 11, 12.

*And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy Brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my Brother's Keeper? And he said, What hast thou done? The Voice of thy Brother's Blood crieth unto me from the Ground.*  
And



### *A TABLE of the Subjects and Texts.*

*And now art thou cursed from the Earth, which hath opened her Mouth to receive thy Brother's Blood from thy Hand.*

*When thou tillest the Ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her Strength. A Fugitive and a Vagabond shalt thou be in the Earth.*

P. 279

### S E R M O N VIII.

The Trial, Conviction, and Condemnation, of *Cain*.

GEN. IV. 10, 11, 12.

*And he said, What hast thou done? The Voice of thy Brother's Blood crieth unto me from the Ground.*

*And now art thou cursed from the Earth, which hath opened her Mouth to receive thy Brother's Blood from thy Hand.*

*When thou tillest the Ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her Strength. A Fugitive and a Vagabond shalt thou be in the Earth.*

P. 299

### S E R M O N IX.

*Cain's Exceptions to the Sentence passed upon him.*

GEN.

*A TABLE of the Subjects and Texts.*

GEN. iv. 13, 14.

*And Cain said unto the Lord, My Punishment is greater than I can bear.*

*Behold, thou hast driven me out this Day from the Face of the Earth: And from thy Face shall I be hid, and I shall be a Fugitive and a Vagabond in the Earth, and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me.*

P. 317

S E R M O N X.

God's Reply to *Cain*; the Mark set upon him, and the Execution of the Sentence.

GEN. iv. 15, 16.

*And the Lord said unto Cain, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, Vengeance shall be taken on him seven-fold. And the Lord set a Mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him.*

*And Cain went out from the Presence of the Lord.*

P. 339

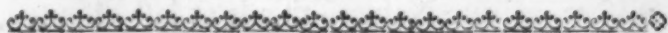
28 SE6D

S E R M O N



# S E R M O N I.

## On the Creation of M A N.



GENESIS i. 27.

*So God created Man in his own Image:  
In the Image of God created he him:  
Male and Female created he them.*



HERE is so evident a Connection between the Redemption and Creation of the World, that we cannot have any just Notions, or a right Understanding of the one, without being fully instructed in the Truth, Manner, and Circumstances of the other; so far, at least, as relateth to the Formation and Origin of Man.

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That the World was at some Time created, and that Man was produced by the same eternal Cause of all Things, is now generally admitted as an uncontestable and universal Truth, to be questioned by none, that will examine into the Causes of Things by any fixed Principles of Reason; but in what Manner all Things were produced, and, particularly, whether Man was created in a more perfect State, or whether he was first brought into the World with all those inordinate Passions, Affections, and Lusts, which we call, and have been taught to esteem Imperfections and Blemishes in our Nature, this is at last disputed, and the latter affirmed with great Boldness, in this Age and Nation. If we consult our Reason alone, and reflect upon the Goodness and Wisdom, as well as on the Power of our Creator, we shall soon conclude, that as it was in his Power, it was no less agreeable to his Wisdom and Goodness to have created Man perfect and upright in the Strength and Purity of his Mind, without that Predominancy of sensual Affections, without that Obliquity and Byass of the Will, which so strongly sway us against the Judgment and Conviction of our Understanding.

There is no Way to avoid the Force of this Reasoning, nor the Evidence of these Conclusions, but to suppose, that the present State and Condition of Mankind is a State of as great Perfection, as his Nature is capable of in  
this

this World; and that the Prevalence of Sense, the Weakness of our Understanding, and the Crookedness of our Will, are proper to the original and most perfect Conceptions we can frame of human Nature: The Consequence of which will be, as it is with the Patrons of this Scheme, that in yielding to our sensual Desires we do only follow the Law and Necessity of our Nature, and therefore cannot be accountable for Actions meerly natural, nor pronounce them sinful as such. And if this be not the Consequence, then the Consequence is, that if these sensual Gratifications be sinful, these Men make the Author of our Nature to be the Author of Sin.

The first of these especially is the Foundation of Infidelity, and the Retreat of Unbelievers: This is the Doctrine which they do now publish freely and openly to the World, giving a Loose to the Pursuit of their sensual Desires, without any Restraint from any religious Considerations of Good and Evil, or of any Judgment to come.

But thus to reason, and thus to conclude, is to reason and conclude against the Sense and Writings of all Ages, and all Nations, so far as their Notions and Sentiments have been derived to us. The Belief, that Man was created more perfect, is manifest from the best and greatest of the Heathen Writers, who were deeply sensible of the Weakness and Imperfections, and bewailed the Depravity and

Misery of Mankind. Whether they came into these Sentiments by the Workings and Discernment of their Reason alone, or whether they had some imperfect traditionary Account of the Creation, it sheweth the natural Sense of Mankind, who were conscious to themselves of Weakness and Corruption, and have confirmed the Truth of the History by their own constant Opinion.

It is no small Evidence, that the History, we have of the Creation, is true, when we find it not only so agreeable to the Sense of the best and greatest Men among the ancient Heathens, but also to the Principles of our Adversaries themselves, when they are speaking upon other Occasions: For when they make Man's Guilt an Objection to God's Goodness, they do at least silently acknowledge, that it is most agreeable to the Goodness of God to have created Man in a State of Innocence and Perfection.

Thus the Scriptures teach us, he was created; and the Account there given us being most agreeable to the Goodness of God, and the Sentiments of Mankind, I shall consider this History of our Creation as the Ground and Basis of all that is subsequently built upon it; and so, from the original Perfection in which we were created, we may take a full and distinct View of the Fall and Redemption of Mankind.



*On the Creation of Man.* 5

Our original Estate is most emphatically expressed in these august and solemn Words; *So God created Man in his own Image: In the Image of God created he him: Male and Female created he them.*

In discoursing upon these Words I shall lay before you,

- I. The History and Account here given of Man's Creation.
- II. I shall apply this History to such practical Uses, and draw such Inferences and Conclusions, as shall most evidently and most naturally follow from it.

I. For the History of Man's Creation.

To set this in a full and perfect Light I shall take in the whole Procedure and Circumstances of it, as it is here related, and as this Relation is confirmed in other Parts of the Scripture. And first,

1. We may observe the great Distinction and Regard, which God himself expresseth in this Work of his Hands, above all other Parts of the whole Creation: With reference to all other, he only spake the Word, and gave his Command: *By the Word of the Lord were the Heavens made, and all the Host of them by the Breath of his Mouth: And for the Earth, and all the other Creatures of it, He spake, and it was done: He commanded, and it stood fast,* Psal. xxxiii. 6, 9. But when to finish the  
B 3 — Creation,

Creation, and to crown his Work, he createth Man, he enters upon it with Deliberation and Advice; not that it was more difficult to him, but to shew the peculiar Dignity and Excellence of the Creature he calleth a Council, as it were, within himself. The Father speaketh to his eternal Word, even his Son, *by whom also he made the Worlds*, Heb. i. 2. John i. 3. Col. i. 16. and to the Holy Spirit, which moved and brooded on the Face of the Waters. *And God said, Let us make Man in our own Image, after our Likeness, and let them have Dominion over the Fish of the Sea, and over the Fowl of the Air, and over the Cattle, and over all the Earth, and over every creeping Thing that creepeth upon the Earth.*

At other Times, and in all after Communications with Men, God speaketh in the singular Number, except in some very few Instances, where it is manifest he speaketh to, and of other Persons; so that this Form at the Creation of Man sheweth, from the very Beginning of God's Transactions with us, a Plurality of Persons in the eternal and undivided Essence. *God said*, this sheweth the Unity of Essence; *Let us make*, this sheweth the Trinity of Persons. This Form is not peculiar to the eastern Way of speaking, nor did it, when *Moses* wrote, obtain among the Kings of the Earth: So that here, since we find the whole blessed Trinity assembled, as indeed it never is divided, and thus co-operating; the  
Father

*On the Creation of Man.* 7

Father speaking; the Word, as the mighty efficient Cause, producing; and the Holy Spirit moving, and brooding over, and disposing the whole Mass for the Production of all Creatures, infusing into the Earth and Waters a vivifying prolifick Quality; we may easily conceive the more solemn Consultation at the Creation of Man, a Creature of a superior Kind, partaking in some Measure, by way of Similitude and Resemblance, *of the divine Nature*, 2 Pet. i. 4. Where, therefore, the Image of God was to be superinduced, and a Creature to be formed after the divine Likeness, the whole Godhead appeareth and consenteth, and co-operateth in the Work. In producing all other Creatures he seemeth to have commanded at a Distance, but in creating Man he seemeth to have descended, and to have come near, and applied his Hand to the Clay, and his Mouth unto the Nostrils, and to have moulded the plastic Form, and to have breathed into it the Breath of Life; so that we are the Sheep of his Hand, as well as the Sheep of his Pasture: And in this last Work we may discern the Father calling, the Son creating, and the holy Spirit animating and inspiring this beauteous Frame. For as Man was formed and designed to serve his Creator, and to worship, and fall down, and kneel before the Lord his Maker; he would know by this Means, when taught, how he was created, where to direct his Worship, and to distinguish the

creative Powers in the great and sole Object of his Adoration.

2. We may observe, and consider the Proposal itself; *Let us make Man in our Image, after our Likeness, and let them have Dominion, &c.*

What is to be understood by the Image and Likeness here mentioned is a Matter of much Dispute, if we regard the Conceits of Men; but very clear and certain, if we are guided by the Word of God.

Now by the Image of God, and after his Likeness, we must understand such a Resemblance of the divine Nature, as Man is capable of; and then, by considering the Nature of God and of Man, so far as we are able to apprehend what the divine Nature is, we may the more surely understand wherein this Image and Likeness do consist. God, we know, is a Spirit of infinite Wisdom and Goodness, of infinite Holiness and Purity, omniscient in all Acts of the Understanding, and indefectible in the Rectitude of his Will. These Attributes and Perfections are, as we are taught, in some Measure communicable to such of his Creatures whose Natures are made susceptible of them. Some, I know, distinguish between the Image and the Likeness; but so to do is, I conceive, more nice than necessary: I take them to be Words of the same Signification, and, as it is usual in the *Hebrew* Tongue, one is exegetical or explanatory of the other. I shall

shall take them therefore as expressing more variously the same Thing, the Likeness being at most no more than the Indication and Manifestation of the Image.

1. The first Resemblance therefore, wherein this Image and Likeness do consist, is in the Form or Substance of the Soul, which is a Spirit, a living and active Power, infused by God himself; a Particle of the divine Breath, which gave unto Man a distinct Principle of Life, different from the Beasts that perish. This we are acquainted with in the next Chapter, where *Moses* recapitulateth the Whole, and resumeth the Subject of Man's Creation more at large. *The Lord God formed Man of the Dust of the Ground, and breathed into his Nostrils the Breath of Life, and Man became a living Soul, Gen. ii. 7.* His Body was formed of the Earth, and he was in the Hands of his Maker, like Clay in the Hands of the Potter; but besides the animal Soul, which he had in common with the brute Creation, God breathed into him an higher Principle, here called the Breath of Life, or, more properly, Lives (so is the *Hebrew*), to shew his Immortality. For being breathed into him by God himself, it must be of an immortal Substance, and accordingly a Distinction is observed between Man and all other Animals. For Beasts, and Fowl, and Fishes, are only called living Creatures; Man alone is a living Soul. Here we learn the Nature of the Spirit, thus inspired by God,



God, that it is not a dying and perishable, but a living and everlasting Substance. This then is the vital Principle within us: The Body is but as a Garment or Covering, a Receptacle and Dwelling for the Soul to lodge in. And there is a third Principle of Union and Conjunction between the Body and the Spirit of Man, commonly called the animal or sensitive Soul, the Seat of the lower Faculties; of Hunger and Thirst; of Passion and Desire; and therefore, in the whole Frame and Disposition of the human Form, subject to the superior Guidance and Understanding of the Spirit. These three Principles of the human Composition are distinctly mentioned by the Apostle, *1 Thess. v. 23. And I pray God that your whole Spirit, and Soul, and Body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:* A Text which will demand a more particular Examination than I have Time to bestow upon it: And nothing needs be added, but that where the Distinction is made in other Parts of Scripture only between Soul and Body, by the Soul the Spirit properly is understood, and by the Body our animal Frame, as endued with Life and Motion, and acting in Obedience to the Soul. Thus St. Paul exhorteth the *Corinthians*, *1 Ep. vi. 20.* in Consideration that they are bought with a Price, and are not their own; *Therefore, saith he, glorify God in your Body, and in your Spirit, which are God's.*



*On the Creation of Man.* 11

The first Resemblance therefore is in our Spirits, as inspired by God, of a living and immortal Nature.

2. The second Resemblance, according to which we are made in the Image of God after his Likeness, will be found in the intellectual Faculty, including the Understanding and Will, which are both Properties of the same Spirit, whereby we are endued with a Freedom of Action, a Liberty of Choice, a Capacity of Knowledge, and of Wisdom and Discernment in the whole Conduct of our Lives: In all these Man resembleth the divine Being, and beareth the Image of his Maker. We know no intellectual Being besides ourselves, except God and Angels, in the whole Compass of Creation; and as this Faculty is solely derived from God, it is, according to its Measure and Degree, some Image and Likeness of him too. Among created Spirits there are several Orders and Degrees, and some higher Intelligences than others, approaching nearer to the divine Likeness, and bearing more express and manifest Signatures of his Image: And Man himself, the more perfect and clear, and advanced his Understanding is, the more manifest in this Regard is the divine Image, in which he was created.

As God ever existeth by the Perfection and Necessity of his Nature, he is also WHAT he is, of and from himself alone: Free in his Actions, and at perfect Liberty in his Choice, without a Possi-

Possibility of Evil. For he is immutably good, and absolutely supreme, and accountable to none. There is no Superior to command him, nor Equal to control him, nor any to say unto him, What dost thou? But in other intelligent Beings there is not that Immutability, which is essential and therefore peculiar to the sovereign Perfection: They are free, but to Evil as well as Good; and as themselves and their Understandings are finite, their Perfections are short and low in Comparison, and capable of those Imperfections into which both Angels and Men have fallen: However the Spirit, that is the Understanding and Will, as Man is thereby made a living Soul, and a reasonable Creature, is so far a Resemblance of the divine Image and Likeness, in which he was created.

3. But thirdly, Man was not only created after the Likeness, and in the Image of God, with respect to those natural Excellencies of Immortality and Understanding, but more especially with regard to the moral Perfections of Purity and Holiness.

In these the Image of God in Man did principally consist; these carried the fairest and most lovely Resemblance of the Creator; these are the Grace and Glory of his intellectual Powers; and without these, Immortality itself is the severest Punishment. From the Loss of these all our Misery is derived, and the Diminution of Goodness was in every Degree a De-

## On the Creation of Man. 13

Defacement of that glorious Image. Though we ceased not to be immortal in our Spirits, yet the Understanding was darkened, and our Reason gave us but a faint Glimmering of its divine Original; and as we are accountable to our great Lord and Master, the Immortality of our Souls qualified us only for Misery equal to their Duration.

We are truly like unto God no further than we resemble him in Holiness, Goodness, and Purity: The Devils retain still their Immortality, and their Knowledge; but when *they* lost their Goodness, the divine Image was entirely defaced; they are so far from bearing any Resemblance, that they are diametrically opposite and contradictory to the divine Nature, and in them Evil, as in God Goodness, is essential. Knowledge and Immortality joined with Goodness, give indeed the most beautiful Likeness; but separated from it, God alloweth them to bear no Resemblance of him.

We may learn wherein this original Likeness chiefly consisted at our first Creation, by considering wherein consists the Renovation of our Nature: This is declared in great Variety of correspondent Expressions. So we are said *to be born again*, John iii. 3, 5, 7. 1 Pet. i. 23. *to be renewed*, Rom. xii. 2. Eph. iv. 23. Col. ii. 10. in Consequence of which, we are called *a new Creature, a new Man*, 2 Cor. v. 17. Gal. vi. 15. Eph. ii. 15. iv. 24. Coloss. iii. 10. and figuratively, *a new Lump*, 1 Cor. v. 7. The efficient

efficient and instrumental Causes of this New Birth are, *the Laver of Regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost*, Titus iii. 5. In Consequence of all which the Apostle requireth us to be renewed in the Spirit of our Mind, and to put on the New Man, which after God, or according to the divine Pattern, is created in Righteousness and true Holiness, or the Holiness of Truth; that Holiness, which is inseparable from his essential Verity; all Wickedness being a Lie, and a direct Denial of his eternal Truth. In like Manner we are commanded to be perfect, as our Father which is in Heaven is perfect, Mat. v. 48. that is, that we propose the Perfection of the divine Goodness for our Pattern, and copy after it, as near as we can. And thus in the Gospel, as formerly under the Law, Levit. xi. 44. xix. 2. God commands in a more excellent and evangelical Sense; *Be ye holy, for I am holy*, 1 Pet. i. 16. And to the same Purpose St. John teacheth us, 1 Ep. iii. 2. *Beloved, now we are the Sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be*, that is, to what high Degrees of Glory and Perfection we shall be raised; *but this we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him, as he is*. Our greatest Happiness and Perfection will consist in our Likeness to him; and as *without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord*, Heb. xii. 14. our being admitted to that beatifick Vision will for ever beget in us a nearer Resemblance of him. *We shall be like him,*  
for

*On the Creation of Man.* 15

*for we shall see him as he is.* And therefore with great Reason he inferreth, at the next Verse, *Every Man that hath this Hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure.* In this Sense the Elect of God are to be *conformed to the Image of his Son*, Rom. viii. 29. that by endeavouring to recover and improve the divine Likeness here, we may be more perfectly like him hereafter; as the Apostle admirably expresseth the whole Progress and Improvement of this Resemblance from our Beginning in Grace to our Consummation in Glory. *But we all with open Face beholding as in a Glass the Glory of the Lord, are changed into the same Image, from Glory to Glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord*, 2 Cor. iii. 18.

In what therefore this Image and Likeness is to consist hereafter, in that, as to the Kind, it consisted at our original Creation, and that, we see, is Holiness, Goodness, and Purity; we can only endeavour to retrieve these in this Life; and therefore our sincere Endeavours shall be accepted thro' Faith in our Saviour, and all our Defects supplied by the Imputation of his most perfect Righteousness, and the Application of his infinite Merits.

4. *Fourthly*, There is still a further Opinion, according to which the Image of God consisted in the Dominion over all Things conferred upon Man at his first Creation; but this is not the Image and Likeness then impressed upon our Nature: It is  
rather



rather a Grant and Donation in Consequence and Consideration of the Divine Image implanted in our first Parents. They were created in this Image, before this Dominion was given, as is evident from the Order and Series of the Words.

And this is still more evident, because upon his Transgression Man lost, in some measure, his Dominion also, and the Earth was cursed for his Sake; that is, the Blessing was revoked, and had absolutely been repealed, had he absolutely fallen without being admitted to Grace and Pardon. This Curse continued from *Adam* to *Noah*, and from being Lord of the Earth, and having all Nature spontaneously to supply and obey him, while he sat enthroned in Paradise and Innocence, he was driven out from his Palace, and doomed to till the Ground, whence he was taken, and in the Sweat of his Face and in Sorrow did he eat his Bread all the Days of his Life. When he was no longer Master of himself, he could ill maintain his Dominion over all the World besides; the Earth yielded not her Fruits without his Labour, as in *Eden*, neither did the Beasts retain that Fear and Subjection to him, which was first implanted in them. For when God, as we read in *Gen. viii. 21.* determined in his Heart that he would not curse the Ground any more for Man's Sake; and in the ixth, when we read that he renewed the Blessing of *Adam* to *Noah* and his Sons; *Be ye fruitful, and multiply,*



*zily, and replenish the Earth, he conferreth upon them the Dominion also. And the Fear of you, and the Dread of you, shall be upon every Beast of the Earth, and upon every Fowl of the Air, upon all that moveth upon the Earth, and upon all the Fishes of the Sea; into your Hand they are delivered.* In these Words is a new Grant of Dominion, upon God's entering into Covenant with *Noah*, who had found Grace in his Sight; and here we see, the Fear and Dread of Man is particularly restored, as a necessary Circumstance of that Dominion. If these, the Fear and Dread, be not observed to continue upon the stronger and more savage Beasts, this may be a good Document and Instruction to us; that as Man rebelleth against God, they also should rebel against Man again.

From what hath been delivered upon this Head, I may seem to argue, that Dominion is founded in Grace, and that none but the Saints have a Right to rule. What I have asserted is plain historical Fact, that God first created Man in his own Image, and afterwards invested him with Dominion; so that Dominion is not that Image of God in which Man was created; nor is it, unless it be accompanied with Goodness, any Resemblance of the Creator. Man forfeited indeed the Grant of this Dominion, as he did his Life also by his Sin; but this is very distant from the bloody Doctrine of Dominion's being founded in Grace; for the

Dominion here granted is that of Man over the Earth, and the Beasts thereof: The Dominion there maintained, is that of some Men over the rest of Mankind: In the former there was a Dominion of Property conveyed, which assigned the Earth, and all that therein is, to the Use and Service of Man. The latter, the Dominion of the Saints, as they call themselves, depriveth the rest of Mankind of all Property, whether stated, or at large, and confines it to themselves: The one was given to Man in the original and unspotted Purity of his Nature, the other is pretended to by those Hypocrites, who, under a Shew of Sanctity, have practised the greatest Villainies, and wallowed in the foulest Impurities. After all, when the Grant was renewed to *Noah*, it was derived, and descended to all Mankind in the present imperfect and sinful Condition of their Nature: Nor can it be forfeited, but by those whose Brutality, Maxims, Principles, and Practices, render them Enemies to the rest of Mankind; and therefore it is by none more clearly forfeited, than by those very Men, who, upon this proud Pretence, would lay the whole World in Blood and Desolation.

We have seen the original Perfection in which Man was created, even in the Image of God; and, among other Resemblances of his Maker, the chiefest, upon which the other Lineaments depend, are Goodness, Holiness, and Purity. I shall now, in the last Place,

II. Apply this History to such practical Uses, and draw such Inferences and Conclusions, as shall most naturally follow from it.

I. According to this Account, our present State and Condition is not that State in which we were created. To call this a State of Perfection surrounded with so many Infirmities both of Mind and Body, is a monstrous Position, and highly reflecting upon the Wisdom, Goodness, and Power of God: In this Respect every other Creature upon Earth is more perfect than Man: Each of them is every way fitted to answer the End of their Creation, and they do all do it, every one in every Instance, according to their several Kinds, in one constant uniform Manner, without any Failure or Variation. Man alone deviateth and disobeyeth, and through a peculiar Depravity is most irregular in his sensual Appetite, in which all other Creatures are most uniform. This Deviation from Nature is an unanswerable Argument that Man was not so created with these Irregularities upon him; these are manifest Blots and Errors since thrown upon the fair Original, and so many Marks of Man's Degeneracy from his native Perfection: Those who pretend he was created in this sinful State, and publish that strange Opinion to the World, believe not the Word of God, and are unworthy of the Name of Men. The best and wisest of the Heathen saw and lamented the Depra-

vity of human Nature: They argued truly, that they were not created in this imperfect Condition; they had a worthy Notion of higher Perfections; and being sensible of their Crimes, and conscious of their Guilt, they charged their present State upon a defecting, a declining, and departing from the original Rule of their Duty, still degenerating till they grew worse and worse, till they came to a Stand, as it were, and a Crisis in Sin. And this is a true Account in the main, without being acquainted with those punctual Circumstances delivered in the Scriptures.

2. As we were created perfect, it is our Duty to endeavour after that Perfection in which we were created: By the Gospel Covenant we are enabled to recover it so far here, as to qualify us for higher and more enlarged Perfections hereafter. The Enemies of our Faith must have Notions of much greater Perfections than they possess; and as they must observe that some Mens Understandings are more bright and elevated than others, and that Reason itself may be improved by a constant, diligent, and due Cultivation of it, they are obliged upon their own Principles to attend upon this Improvement, and to perfect their own Nature as far as by their utmost Care and Application they are able: So that, whatever Sense they have of moral Evil, whether it be little, or almost none at all, if indulging their Lusts doth cloud and darken the Mind, deprave the Will,  
and

and distract their Understanding, they are obliged to curb and subdue their irregular Appetites, or they do not keep up to the Dignity, nor endeavour the Perfection of their Nature; and then, altho' for the Sake of gratifying their inordinate Desires they may deny the Faith, yet they will find themselves concluded by their own Principles, and must acknowledge, that not the Gospel only, but the Dictates of their beloved Reason, and that Nature which they pretend to follow, forbid those sensual Gratifications. They, like the Gentile World, may see the Malady; but unless they look into the Word of God, they will never find the Cure.

3. And in the third Place, beloved Brethren, therefore let us duly consider how we are fallen, and how we are restored; but as I cannot pursue these Points at present, I shall conclude with this Exhortation in the Words of St. Paul, Eph. iv. 22. *That ye put off, concerning the former Conversation, the old Man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful Lusts; and be renewed in the Spirit of your Mind: And that ye put on the new Man, which after God is created in Righteousness and true Holiness.* Having therefore at our Baptism put off the old Man with his Deeds, and having put on the new Man, which is renewed in Knowledge after the Image of him that created him, Coloss. iii. 9, 10. let us remember, that we are new Creatures; that we are redeemed and delivered from the Bondage



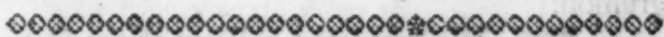
of Corruption, and once more asserted into the glorious Liberty of the Sons of God. We have a new Principle of Life implanted in us by the Spirit of God, without which we are dead to all Happiness and Glory: It is this blessed Spirit which reneweth our Minds, and purifieth our Nature, and repaireth our Breaches; which assisteth us in our Duty, and comforteth us in our Afflictions, and will bring us unto Glory through the free Grace and Mercy of God in *Christ Jesus* our Lord: *For not by Works of Righteousness which we have done, but according to his Mercy he saved us by the Washing of Regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost,* Tit. iii. 5. And whatever we were before, however miserable and dead in Trespasses and Sins, being by Nature the Children of Wrath even as others, we do most humbly acknowledge that such indeed we were; but we are washed, but we are sanctified, but we are justified in the Name of the Lord *Jesus*, and by the Spirit of our God, by this ever blessed and adorable Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; to whom therefore be ascribed, as is most due, all Honour and Glory, all Love and Adoration, all Might, Majesty, and Dominion, for ever and ever. *Amen.*





## S E R M O N II.

### Of the TRANSGRESSION.



GEN. iii. 9, 10, 11.

*And the Lord God called unto Adam,  
and said unto him, Where art thou?*

*And he said, I heard thy Voice in the  
Garden, and I was afraid, because I  
was naked, and I hid myself.*

*And he said, Who told thee that thou  
wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the  
Tree whereof I commanded thee that  
thou shouldest not eat?*



WE have seen the Creation, and now  
we may behold the Fall of Man.  
God created Man upright in Inte-  
grity, Innocence, and Immorta-  
lity, and gave him a Command for the Proof  
and Trial of his Obedience: This Command  
he transgressed, and by Transgression fell.

It may be necessary therefore to take a Review of our first Parents, in what State they stood when the Command was given, and then I shall proceed to the Command itself, and the Violation of it: This will lead us to the Consequence of that Violation in the Guilt contracted, the Depravity induced, and the Punishment inflicted upon Mankind for his Transgression.

I. *First*, We may take a View of the State our first Parents stood in when the Command was given, and that was a State of Innocence. They were created in the Image of God, and Innocence is one essential Part of that Image: For God to produce a sinful and corrupt Creature, and call it his Image, is an Article of no Creed but an Infidel's; that a Creature of his Hands should corrupt himself afterwards, is no Impeachment of the divine Wisdom, or Goodness, or Justice; none is necessarily and essentially good but himself alone: For there is none good but one, and that is God. It is enough for a Creature to be made perfect and upright according to the Order and Degree he is to hold in the Scale of Beings; and so Man was created in the Perfection of human Nature, with sufficient Powers to persevere, and improve, and go on to higher Degrees of Perfection from the Beginning throughout the whole Course of his Duration, even unto Eternity; but still, tho' thus perfect in Nature, he was endued with such a Freedom and Liberty of Choice, as to  
leave

leave it possible that he might fail. So Angels were created with all the intellectual Perfections that Creatures could receive, and yet some, even Myriads of them, fell; and had Mankind been created as Angels were, the whole Number at first; as some might have fallen like them, like them also others might have stood. From the Angels who continued stedfast we may learn what they were that fell, and from what the Scriptures require us in this Life to be, and assure us what in the next we shall be, we may learn what we were created; perfect at least, and upright, so far as not only to be free from all Defects whether natural or moral, but capable of continual Improvement, to higher and higher Degrees of Perfection still.

At our first Creation therefore, and during the State of Innocence, the Understanding was clear, and readily closed with every Truth that was made known unto it: The Affections were regular, and the Will unbiassed under the supreme Command and Direction of Reason, and the supremest Law of Reason, which is every Command of God, or, in other Words, Religion: For it is an immutable Maxim, That is ever most reasonable, which God requireth.

And thus the Worship of their Creator, Obedience to his positive Command, and conjugal Affection to each other, were the great divine Duties, both instituted and moral, which were adapted to the State of Innocence. All  
reli-

religious Duties are founded in the Relation Man beareth to his Creator, and divine Worship is of absolute and eternal Obligation: All moral Duties then incumbent on them, rose from the Relation our first Parents stood in to each other, not only as Woman took her Beginning from Man, but more especially as she was brought and married unto him by God himself. For the Words at the 24th Verse of this Chapter are the Words of God, so attested to be by our blessed Saviour. *Therefore shall a Man leave his Father, and his Mother, and shall cleave unto his Wife, and they twain shall be one Flesh.* Here, I would observe, is a moral Duty rising from a positive Institution, and made to supersede those Duties purely moral, which we owe unto our Father and Mother whenever conjugal Affection cometh into Competition with them. The third is, the special Duty rising from the Command or Prohibition concerning the Tree of Knowledge. It is meerly positive in itself, but the Obligation of Obedience to it is equally moral, and of the same Force with our Obligation to any Duties that are entirely moral. This then was their State and Condition upon their first Creation; and as God had given them the Dominion of the World, he seated them in the Garden of *Eden*, as in the Throne and Palace of their Kingdom. How long they continued in this happy State, is not determined; and the Conjectures raised about it are only so many needless Curiosities.

The

## *Of the Transgression.* 27

The Time however is in some measure to be collected, tho' not to a Day, yet, from some special Circumstances, that it was beyond a Day, at least beyond the Day of their Creation.

Thus then they stood in a State of Innocence when the Command was given, and so it must necessarily have been; for before there is a Law, there can be no Transgression: And God himself doth virtually pronounce them innocent, when he proposes to them this singular Trial of their Obedience. From the State therefore they stood in, I pass now

2. In the second Place, to the Command itself; *Hast thou eaten of the Tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat?* The Command itself we have at the 16th and 17th Verses of the second Chapter; *And the Lord God commanded the Man, saying, Of every Tree of the Garden thou mayest freely eat, but of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, thou shalt not eat of it: For in the Day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*

This is the original Law given to Mankind, and it consists properly of the Prohibition or strict Matter of the Law, and of the Sanctions annexed, which are those of Reward, or Encouragement to Obedience, and of Denunciation and Penalty to the Disobedient.

I. The Law itself is, *But of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, thou shalt not eat of it.* This Law, thus solemnly published,  
was



was thoroughly understood; and by the Woman's Answer to the Tempter we find that she thought, at least she represented the Prohibition stricter than the Words import; as if not the eating only, but even the touching of that Tree, was forbidden.

At this Distance we cannot so well understand the Terms and Reason of this Law, and therefore, tho' possibly we cannot satisfy all Scruples, nor answer all Cavils, we ought not to join with Infidels and Blasphemers, to ridicule and condemn it.

What the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil was, we know not, nor why it was so called, except from the Event; nor what were the Virtues, that it should make one wise: And it is very probable that our first Parents themselves knew not the supernatural Virtues either of the Tree of Knowledge, or of the Tree of Life. What Good is, they knew, both by Speculation and Experience; what Evil is, they knew by Speculation only: The experimental Knowledge of it proceeded from their Transgression. The Knowledge of Evil, considered only as opposed to Good, doth not suppose either Guilt or Evil in us; and while our first Parents continued innocent, their Knowledge of Evil was like God's Knowledge of it, without any Touch or Contamination: So much at least they knew of Evil, that it was Evil to disobey God's Command, tho' till they had disobeyed



*Of the Transgression.* 29

obeyed they knew not, that is, they did not feel what that Evil was.

As for the Reasons, or the Reasonableness of this Law, tho' they did not perhaps see them, they were nevertheless obliged to obey it: Knowing it was the Command of God, they were thereby concluded; and in all God's Commands, whether we see any Reason for them, or no, it is always a sufficient Reason that they are his Commands.

And for ourselves, however we may pretend not to be satisfied concerning the Commandment itself, that it came from God, much less concerning the Reasons, whether we discern them, or whether we disapprove of them, when we fancy that we see them, it is all one, we are peremptorily concluded; and in like manner, that Person among us who calleth himself a Christian, and refuseth to obey the Institutions of *Christ*, let him pretend either Want of Conviction that they are his Institutions, or that they are perpetual, or that they are obliging to those that are Christians already, he unavoidably involveth himself in the Guilt of Transgression, and may as well presume to deny *Christ* himself, as to deny his Institutions.

With our first Parents this was evidently the Case; that God commanded, was enough: And as they could not dispute the Evidence, neither would they have been suffered to dispute

pute the Reason of the Command. Nor shall we at this Distance be allowed to question either the Fact, or the Reason; and however impious Men take a Licence of ridiculing and blaspheming the Word of God, they shall find themselves severely accountable for all the foolish Wit, and Blasphemy and Buffoonery, they have vented against the sacred Oracles. The Universality of Evil is a Demonstration of the Fact; and as this universal Effect must proceed from some universal Cause, none other ever hath been, or can be assigned, which could derive upon Men such Guilt and Depravity as they have universally laboured under ever since.

As to the Reason, Justice, and Fitness, of the Command, it may not perhaps, most surely it doth not become us to question whether, and how far the Commands of God are just and reasonable, and fit either for him to give, or for us to obey; lest by measuring the Ways of God by our own, we bring ourselves to conclude, as some silly Reasoners have done, that it is not the Command of God, and ought not to be obeyed: As it is boldly avowed in the Case of *Abraham*, that the Command to offer up his Son could not come from God, and ought not to be obeyed. But we will leave these bold Blasphemers to our great Creator, the supreme Lord and Disposer of our Lives.

But with reference to this original Command, we say in general, that it was certainly  
most

most reasonable, just, and fitting, that God should require some visible Proof and Testimony of Man's Obedience, in some Instance distinct from the natural Duties and Obligations incumbent on him. For the natural Duties had been no Trial, while Man continued in the Purity and Rectitude of his Nature; and possibly no other Proof could then have been given, but in some Instance of Restraint in which Man might have an Occasion to exercise the Dominion of his Reason over the lower Appetites, and the Affections of his Soul.

This therefore was a proper Test to evidence Man's Obedience in his Actions, and manifest his Submission and Regard to his Maker. To acknowledge him sovereign Lord of all, the Possessor of Heaven and Earth, before, or in the Presence of all the rest of the intelligent Creation; the Angels that stood, and those also that had fallen. God alone can judge of the Heart; finite Creatures can judge by the Actions only; and therefore in this Prohibition God doth not lay the Restraint upon the Desire, but upon the Act: He saith not, *Thou shalt not covet*, but *Thou shalt not eat*. The Transgression of the Heart no Creature could judge of, the Transgression of the Hand the whole intelligent Creation could discern.

This then is not only a proper Instance wherein to exercise and evidence Man's Obedience; but if we look more attentively into the Nature of the Law, we shall find it exactly

calculated to the Nature of Man also, according to the inward Frame and Constitution of his Soul and Spirit, as the Affections of his Soul ought alway to be in Subjection to the Spirit, and the Spirit, that high intellectual Faculty, is to be ever in Subjection to the Father of Spirits. This Command therefore layeth a Restraint upon both the Spirit and the lower Faculties; upon the sensual Appetite in forbidding them to eat, upon the Pride of the Spirit in forbidding them to eat of the Tree of Knowledge. Accordingly, the Tempter applied himself to both these, to the inferior and superior Faculty: to the inferior, by shewing the Fruit, that it was good for Food, and pleasant to the Eyes, to the superior by recommending it as a Tree to be desired to make one wise. This indeed was the chief and masterly Stroke of the Temptation, *Your Eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as Gods, knowing Good and Evil.* Pride is a spiritual and intellectual Sin, till then peculiar to the grand Apostate, and his Crew: He that had boasted, *I will be like the Most High*, the same deceived our first Parents, when he told the Woman, *Ye shall be as Gods.* The Restraint therefore was fitly laid on the inferior and superior Faculties, to guard and fortify the two first of Mankind against the Insinuation and Attempts of the Enemy, and calling them to the due Exercise of their Reason in maintaining a just Dominion over the Pride and Passion of their Nature.

Perhaps

Perhaps some Argument may be drawn from the Nature of the Tree, why it of all others should be prohibited, as being of fatal and pernicious Powers to inflame the Blood, or intoxicate the Brain, or to shake and discompose the whole animal Frame; but as this is meerly conjectural, and nothing can be certainly concluded, where nothing can be certainly known, we must endeavour to vindicate the Reasonableness of the Command upon surer Grounds: And therefore I shall further proceed more particularly to justify this Command of God, as it requires some visible external Mark of Obedience.

For as Man is created a free Agent, of perfect Choice and Liberty in his Actions, it is highly congruous to Man's Nature for God to require some Instance of his Obedience, where it depended meerly upon his Choice, as in a Matter of Indifferency it chiefly doth. For in Matters of natural Duty, especially such natural Duties as could only then, in that State of Things, be incumbent on our first Parents, there is something so lovely to recommend them to Choice, Nature itself, while undepraved, doth so strongly incline us to them, that were not the Mind first vitiated and darkened, we should naturally be carried to them with a perfect Preference of Estimation: An indifferent Matter therefore leaveth us most at Liberty, so as not to incline us one Way or other from any Consideration of the Thing itself; or if there



was any Thing inviting and alluring in the Thing itself, the eating or not eating was, till forbidden, indifferent; and the Terror of the Command was a sufficient Balance against the Beauty of the Tree.

Such then was the Subject of this Law in the Restraint and Prohibition of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. To all natural Duties, as he is made such a Creature under such Relations, Man is previously engaged: This positive Precept, or some such, only could be made a special Instance of their Obedience.

The Words of the Law are exceeding plain, as the Object was conspicuous: They knew what was meant by not eating, and the Tree forbidden they could not mistake, for the Woman describes it to be *the Tree in the midst of the Garden*, so particularly had God pointed it out unto them. Now how severe soever the Penalty is, the Law itself is easy; and if any Restraint be put upon them, none could be more easy than this. So I come to consider, secondly,

II. The Sanctions of this Law, which are the Reward and Encouragement of Obedience, and the Penalty denounced upon their Disobedience: *Of every Tree in the Garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil thou shalt not eat of it: for in the Day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die,* Gen. ii. 17.

These



These Sanctions are the Motives for observing, and the Guards against transgressing the Law: They are its Fences and Circumvallation without, and enforce it with Life and Vigor upon the Conscience within: One proceeds entirely from the free Goodness and Mercy of God, the other from his Justice, ever mixed with Mercy; and both are intended originally, and in the first Place, to secure the Observance of the Law. The Reward is most certain, and primarily intended upon Obedience; the Penalty is only mentioned in a secondary Manner, to prevent his Disobedience.

I. *First*, then, for the Encouragement and Reward of Obedience; there is something peculiar in this Sanction adapted to the Form and Nature of the Law: The Law itself is a Restraint, but this Sanction is a free and unre-served Grant in all other Respects. No Tree, but the Tree of Knowledge, is forbidden; *Of every Tree in the Garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, thou shalt not eat of it.* The Grant is a discretionary Permission to eat or not to eat of every other Tree; the Prohibition is an absolute Restraint from one, and but from one, of all the Trees in the Garden. God doth not command him to eat of every other Tree (that were an harder Injunction than the Restraint from one only); but when he forbids him one, he leaves him at Liberty to eat of all the rest, at his Pleasure. This is the general

Encouragement; an ample Compensation for one single Restraint.

But this Sanction carried also a more special Reward and particular Encouragement with it: It gives him, among others (what is more than all the rest) the Tree of Life to eat of, and to live for ever: This could be forfeited by Transgression only, and tho' Knowledge in some Sense may be said to be better than Life itself, that is, than this short Life which we live here, as it were, for a Moment, yet the Knowledge even of Good, with its inseparable and fatal Concomitant the Knowledge of Evil also, is no ways to be put in Competition with Life, an happy and eternal Life! so great and gracious is the Encouragement, so merciful and easy is the Restraint!

And thus from the Encouragement we pass now to the other Sanction.

2. That of the Penalty denounced to deter them from Disobedience.

This in human Laws is properly the Sanction: In them a Reward is seldom promised to the Obedient, but if any be proposed, it is generally for the Detection and Punishment of the Disobedient. In God's Laws alone the Rewards are great and glorious, and Mercy rejoiceth against Judgment. In human Laws the Penalty is the only Guard and Enforcement of them; and no Wonder, that Penalty is now essential to a Law, when it was necessary to be proposed, and set before our first Parents even  
in

in the Innocence and Integrity of their Nature. This is a full Proof, that tho' they were created upright, they were in a Possibility of falling, where so strong a Curb was thrown upon them to hold them up, lest they should stumble, and fall. This also sheweth the original Freedom of their Will, when such Motives are offered, and so severe a Sentence is pronounced to keep them in their Duty.

The Sanction is, *For in the Day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die*; that is, become mortal, and be subject to Death, both natural and spiritual. The obvious and primary Signification of the Words portends only a present and natural Death, as they are explained afterwards, Chap. iii. 9. *Dust thou art, and to Dust thou shalt return*. The Death, that is, the spiritual and eternal Death of the Soul, is not here expressed, but it is manifestly implied, both in the Promise of Grace and Pardon freely made unto them at the very Time of pronouncing Sentence upon them; and also understood, from the constant Tenor of the Scriptures afterwards, which runs all along in a perpetual Reference to the Guilt and Condemnation of Man upon this Transgression. For here was not only the Breach of a positive Command, but moreover a Breach and Defilement in the Integrity and Purity of their Nature. They did not only transgress, but by transgressing they contracted also a Depravity of the Will and Affections; they brought a

## 38      S E R M O N   II.

Cloud and Confusion upon the higher intellectual Faculties, and subverted the internal Order and Frame of Government in the Soul and Spirit, making the Understanding subject to the Will, and the Will to the Affections, particularly to the two great sensitive Appetites of Passion and Desire.

The Depravity thus contracted by our first Parents, descends to all their Posterity, and is that original Sin and Obliquity in which we are born; and so not for the special Imputation of this very Sin, but of the Guilt incurred thro' this natural Depravity derived with our very Beings, Death passed upon all Men, for that all have sinned.

For as St. Paul teacheth, \* *Death reigned from Adam to Moses, (and ever since doth reign) over them that had not sinned after the Similitude of Adam's Transgression; all are subject to it, being by Nature the Children of Wrath.* The Apostle setteth forth our Condemnation in *Adam*, and our Justification in *Christ*, in a beautiful Contrast, setting one in a full and various Antithesis or Opposition against the other; and sheweth, that where Sin abounded, Grace did much more abound; that as Sin hath reigned unto Death by *Adam*, even so might Grace reign thro' Righteousness unto eternal Life by *Jesus Christ* our Lord. The Death therefore is, as the Life, eternal. From this eternal, this spiritual Death, we are delivered by *Christ* our Lord.

\* Rom. v. 14.

But

But from this temporal, or natural Death, none, except some few special Favourites of Heaven, are exempted. Its being temporal implieth a Deliverance at last; *But it is appointed unto Men once to die*, that is to come to some certain Period of this mortal Life.

And altho' by the Grace of God our blessed Saviour tasted Death for every Man, yet there are none standing here which shall not taste of Death: All but those who are alive at his coming shall die; they indeed shall not die, but they shall be changed, that is, in a Moment, in the Twinkling of an Eye their Bodies shall be fitted for Misery or Glory. As the Dead shall be raised incorruptible, so they shall be changed; for of the Righteous especially we are assured, that this Corruptible must put on Incorruption, and this Mortal must put on Immortality, either when we are raised again from the Grave, or when, if we be alive at his coming, we shall be changed; in both Cases our vile Bodies shall be fashioned like unto his glorious Body, and we shall all be delivered from the Grave, and among the Number of his Elect be received unto Glory.

From this temporal Death all shall be delivered; but the great Deliverance is from the bitter Pains of eternal Death. As Man was created for Happiness and Immortality, by his Transgression he forfeited both; and those who place his Punishment in Mortality alone, as if this Life put an absolute Period to his



Being; they, for the Sake of exempting themselves from eternal Misery, would deprive God's faithful Servants of eternal Happiness.

We have now seen the State our first Parents stood in, when this Law was given; we have looked upon the Law itself, and the Sanctions to enforce it; Man received it in a State of Innocence; it was perhaps the only Law of Restraint that could at that Time have been given him, at least we can devise no other; it was worthy of God, and adapted to the Nature of Man; it taught him an early Submission and Obedience to his Creator; it chequed all vain Curiosity, and undue aspiring after Knowledge; it confined him to seek for Knowledge in the Way God had ordained, and to avoid it in the Way God had forbidden; it taught him to keep his Senses and Appetite in due Subjection, and above all to acknowledge his Creator supreme Lord and Sovereign over him and all the World. God gave him an unlimited Dominion, but with this Exception; this he reserved to himself; it was a Royalty Man was debarred from: By this Restraint God claimed this Tree more peculiarly for his own; all indeed were his. The rest he granted away, this alone he reserved; and it was after the Prohibition not only a Transgression, but Sacrilege and Prophanation to eat of it. The Prohibition itself was an absolute Command, in a Matter otherwise indifferent: For, whatever might be the natural Powers and Operations of the



the Tree, to have eaten of it had been no Sin, if to eat of it had not been forbidden.

From what hath been said we may learn,

1. *First*, That the Obligation of positive Laws standeth not at all in the Reason of the Thing, but solely in the Will of God. The Command is peremptory and absolute without any Reason, except this may be implied, which in other positive Instances is afterwards very frequently expressed: *I am the Lord thy God*. The Temptation was founded upon disputing the Reason and Nature of the Command. And the first Step to the Fall was the questioning the Equity and Intention of the Law.

From what hath been said we may learn, secondly,

2. That the true Principle of Obedience to God's positive Commands is, to obey because he commandeth. Obedience is of moral Obligation, whatever be the Subject of the Law, whether of a moral or positive Nature: 'Tis an universal Proposition of eternal Truth, that God is to be obeyed in whatsoever he commandeth; and he that disobey his positive Command contracteth a moral Guilt, as a Transgressor of God's Law, and a Rebel to his Will.

We may learn, in the third Place,

3. That the Sanctions are not to be measured from the Nature and Quality of the Law, but from the Will and Authority of the Law-giver: It might seem a small Thing to have

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eaten of the forbidden Fruit, but no Transgression against God is small; and the Devil put a Fallacy upon *Eve*, when comparing, as it were, the Greatness of the Penalty with the Smalness of the Offence, he insinuated that artful Lie, *Ye shall not surely die*. But as I said no Offence against our Maker is to be accounted light, and in every Instance, even of his positive Commands, we shall find it not a small, but an evil Thing, and a bitter, to have forsaken the Lord our God: And it is plain the penal Sanction was not too severe, when it did not deter Man from violating the Law of his Creator. The first End of Sanctions is to secure Obedience, the next is to reward the Obedient, and punish the Disobedient: By the one it pleaseth God to encourage and invite his faithful Servants to their Duty; by the other he vindicates upon Transgressors the Honour of his Laws; if the Penalty be great, so is the Reward: The Reward is of the meer Grace and transcendent Goodness of God; the Penalty is the necessary Effect of his Justice; and to say all in a Word, supposing the Matter of the Law in itself to be never so small, the Transgression even from thence may be greatly aggravated, and he, who breaketh the least Commandment, how shall he keep the greater?

We have so far a just and satisfactory Account of the Fall of Man, a Cause assigned commensurate to the universal Depravity of human Nature in breaking the Bounds of the

*Of the Transgression.* 43

sensual Appetite, and letting loose the carnal Affections without insisting on the spiritual Nature and Aggravation of the Sin; this openeth to us the Original of our Guilt, and teacheth us the Necessity of a Saviour.

We see the Mercy of God as early as our Transgression, and his Grace abounding above our Sins: This Grace it is our Duty with all Joy and Thankfulness to accept, to lay hold of the Mercy of God in *Christ Jesus*, that thro' him, and the Grace of his holy Spirit, we may be regenerated, and sanctified, and made Inheritors of eternal Life and Salvation, Happiness and Glory, thro' the Mercies of God in *Christ Jesus* our Lord, our most blessed Saviour and Redeemer.

To whom with the Father and the Holy Spirit, be all Honour, and Worship, and Glory, and Blessing, for ever and ever. *Amen.*



SERMON

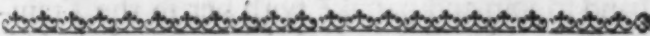




S E R M O N III,  
IV, V, VI.

On GENESIS iii. 15.

Containing an Explication of the several Sentences pronounced upon the Serpent, the Woman and the Man, and of the Mercy of God in the Promise of the Woman's Seed which should bruise the Serpent's Head.



GEN. iii. 15.

*I will put Enmity between thee and the Woman, and between thy Seed and her Seed: It shall bruise thy Head, and thou shalt bruise his Heel.*



OUR first Parents had no sooner transgressed the Command of God in eating of the forbidden Tree, but they presently found in what Manner their Eyes were opened, and how fatal

fatal to them the Knowledge of Good and Evil proved. The Tree had been forbidden under that peculiar Name and Title, and the Gloss, which the Devil put upon the Prohibition, ought to have deterred *Eve* from venturing upon the Fruit: He confirmeth the Character by which the Lord God had distinguished the Tree, and the very mentioning that it would bring them to know Good and Evil was enough to have set the Prohibition full before her Eyes; the very Doubt the Tempter insinuated ought to have raised her Fears; and when he told her, *Ye shall not surely die*, she ought to have had the strongest Apprehension of her Danger. Yet, notwithstanding every Word the Devil uttered was alarming, the Temptation prevailed, and she also prevailed with her Husband to join and partake with her in the Transgression. No sooner had they eaten, but their Heart and their Conscience smote them; the Eyes of them both were opened, and they presently knew that they were naked; they were stripped of their Innocence, which before, like a Robe of Glory, at once defended and adorned them: Their Eyes were opened to the Evil they had done, and they looked upon themselves, and upon each other, with Guiltiness and Shame. Fear and Confusion, Dread and Anguish, seized them, and the first Knowledge they attained was to know that they were naked; their Guilt opened their Eyes to see that they were disrobed of their Grace and  
Glory



*God's Judgment on the Transgressors.* 47

Glory, and despoiled of their Innocence, to whom, in After-ages, *Sampson* shorn of his Strength might have been compared; Conscience of their mutual Guilt made them seek for Covering, and they endeavoured what they could to hide their Shame from each other, and themselves from God. For the first, *they sewed Fig-leaves together, and made themselves Aprons*, that is, they twisted the Branches of the Fig-tree round them, whose broad Leaves might serve for a Covering. They no sooner had transgressed by taking of one Tree for Knowledge, but they were forced to take of another for a Covering to hide, if possible, the Knowledge they had attained: But vain are all Attempts to hide themselves from themselves, or from each other; but more vain to hide themselves from God: They no sooner had transgressed, but their Minds were filled with Guilt and Horror; and while they were under those dismal Terrors, afraid of every Leaf that stirred, in the same Evening God himself came down to reprove, and to judge them. They were sensible of the divine Presence approaching them, and they were sore afraid; they came not now forth with Joy and Cheerfulness to meet him, as they were wont; but *when they heard the Voice of the Lord God walking in the Garden in the Cool of the Day, Adam and his Wife hid themselves from the Presence of the Lord God among the Trees of the Garden.* They did not as yet behold his Presence, but  
they

## 48 S E R M O N III.

they heard the Sound of his Voice walking and approaching towards them; a Voice, that came on in a more dreadful Sound; and they sought the thickest Covert of the Wood to hide themselves: But neither their Fig-leaves, nor the thickest Covert of the Wood, could skreen them from the Presence of the Lord. The Voice they first heard at a Distance, now came nearer and nearer, and called aloud and distinctly, Adam, *where art thou?* And now they came forth out of their Hiding-place, trembling and confounded, and Adam was forced to answer, but he answered lamely, and with a faulting Tongue, first in Excuse for his hiding, and next for his Sin. The Excuse for hiding himself was in Fact a Proof, as in Effect it was a Confession of his Guilt: *I heard thy Voice in the Garden: and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.* Naked; why so he was created, so he had continued, and till they sinned, they were neither ashamed nor afraid; but it was Sin, that discovered to them their Nakedness; it was Guilt, that made them afraid; and now they look with Terror upon God, and with Shame upon each other: God therefore immediately pointeth to the very Cause, and argueth their Guilt from their Nakedness. *Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the Tree, whereof I commanded thee, that thou shouldst not eat?* God asketh, not to be informed, but to convince them that they were discovered, that they were indeed,

*God's Judgment on the Transgressors.* 49

as are all Things else, naked and open unto the Eyes of him with whom they have to do. There was no evading the Question, no denying what they had done; and therefore the Man, thus examined, confesseth, but still with an Excuse, to throw the Guilt, if possible, from himself: And the Man said, *The Woman, whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the Tree, and I did eat.* This is an Excuse which carrieth with it a Reproach to his Maker; *The Woman, whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the Tree.* An Excuse is oftentimes an Aggravation, not an Alleviation of the Crime; the Blame is injuriously reflected upon God, and *Adam* chargeth his Creator as the Cause of his Transgression: He might as justly have reproached his God for giving him his Being, as for giving him the Woman; and for creating the Tree, as for forbidding him to eat of it. Whence soever rises the Temptation, the Fault of transgressing is in ourselves; and tho' the Woman was doubly to blame in transgressing herself, and in tempting her Husband, yet this was no Excuse for the Man; the Command was equally given unto both: And God gave him not the Woman to be a Snare or Temptation, but to be an Help meet for him; and he ought to have remembered the Command of God, and not to have hearkened to the Voice of his Wife.

From *Adam* the divine Presence turneth his Voice to the Woman: *And the Lord God said*

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*unto the Woman, What hast thou done? What grievous Sin, in transgressing thyself, and in making thy Husband to transgress? And the Woman said, the Serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.* This indeed was the Truth, but it was not a full and ingenuous Confession; she concealeth her own Part of the Blame, and puts it all upon the Tempter: She forgets her own Prevarication, Doubt, and Credulity; and tho' she was beguiled, yet that is no just Excuse. But since she makes this her Plea, it may not be useless to consider it.

It is commonly said, that the Serpent was then in Form like the glorious Seraphim who attended the divine Presence; that he moved trowing and upright upon his Feet, with his Head erect, and his Wings displayed, and *Eve* might mistake him for one of the heavenly Host: But she had received the Command from God himself, and she ought to have withstood all less Authority. And indeed had she weighed the Matter as she ought, she might have concluded, that no blessed Spirit would cast out sinister Reflections on the divine Goodness, and raise Doubts of his Veracity, either in the Prohibition, or the Punishment. The Command was peremptory and clear: The Serpent's Suggestions were doubtful and obscure, full of Falshood and Guile; and yet had not the sensual Appetite been moved with Desire of the Fruit; had not her Pride been raised with a Desire to be as Gods, she had refrained her  
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*God's Judgment on the Transgressors.* 51

her Hand from the Tree, and opposed God's single Command to all that the Serpent, or as he might think him, an Angel could offer. However in this so far she said true; *The Serpent*, or, as it is in the Original, the *Saraph*, *beguiled me, and I did eat.*

Beginning with the Man, and proceeding to the Woman, God thus examined the Cause to the Bottom, and found the Tempter the first Mover and Seducer to this foul Transgression: He appeared as a Serpent, made use of that wily and subtle Beast as his Organ or Instrument, thro' whom he might best convey his Temptation; but God saw the Tempter in the Serpent; he summoneth not him to ask why he did this murderous, bloody Act, but taketh him as confessed, and sentenceth him in the Serpent, cursing the whole Kind for being made the Instrument of so much Mischief to Mankind.

The Reason why the Tempter pitched upon the Serpent, hath no Reference to the Individual, but to the Species: Now *the Serpent was more subtle than any Beast of the Field*, that is, than any other Kind among the Beasts of the Field; this Subtilty is ascribed to the whole Species, which was not multiplied as yet, and therefore the Curse of this one fell upon all the Kind.

The Sentence consisteth of a literal and a mystical Part: The literal Part relateth to the true natural Serpent, and the strong Antipathy



which Man and It do bear to each other; the mystical Part relateth to that Seed of the Woman which should break the Power and Tyranny of the Devil, set forth under the Expression of *bruising the Serpent's Head*, in which the Strength and Life, and Venom of the Beast are lodged: But still the Victory was not to be obtained without all Danger and Reluctance. The Serpent, this old Worm, being trod upon would turn again, and *bruise his Heel*, till he shall be quite subdued, and finally beaten down under our Feet. *And I will put Enmity between thee and the Woman, and between thy Seed and her Seed: It shall bruise thy Head, and thou shalt bruise his Heel.*

The latter Part of this Sentence is prophetic, and refers to that absolute Conquest which the promised Seed should obtain over the Devil, and all the Powers of Darknes. We have been taught to understand this Prophecy by the Event; we have clearly seen how far it hath already been fulfilled by our Saviour, and are assured that it shall be fully accomplished by him. This, no doubt, how obscure soever the Words may seem at this Distance to us, was more particularly understood by our first Parents and their Posterity as a Promise of Pardon and Restitution thro' the Seed of the Woman, which should *bruise the Serpent's Head*.

Before I proceed to consider the full Import of the Words themselves, I shall, after this long  
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*God's Judgment on the Transgressors. 53*

Deduction, offer these several remarkable Points to your Observation.

- I. The great Kindness and Love of God to Mankind in the several Sentences pronounced on these three great Delinquents; the Serpent, the Woman, and the Man.
- II. The free Grace and Mercy of God extended to Mankind in this evangelical Promise of *the Seed of the Woman*, which should *bruise the Serpent's Head*.
- III. The due Use and Improvement we are to make of this Passage according to the manifold Goodness and Grace of God here promised, and reached out unto us.

I. I am to offer to your Consideration, the great Kindness and Love of God towards Mankind discovered in the several Sentences pronounced on these three great Delinquents, the Serpent, the Woman, and the Man.

I. *First*, for the Serpent. It is true this Creature was only a passive and involuntary Instrument, which the Devil made use of in his Temptation; but such is the great Love of God to Mankind, that even the brute Creation is made answerable for the Injuries Man receives by any Violence they do him. This is exemplified afterwards in *Exod. xxi. 28, &c.* where, *If an Ox, a quiet and domestic Beast, gore a Man or a Woman, that they die, then the Ox shall be surely stoned.* And for those savage

Beasts whose Nature it is to kill and devour, as they are Beasts of Prey upon others, making other Beasts their Prey and their Food, they are made Beasts of Prey to Mankind, to be hunted down and destroyed as common Enemies to the Life of Man.

The Devil, by thus possessing the Serpent, and speaking in him, had committed a Sacrilege upon God's Creation, and infused into the Beast, whose Body he had usurped, an inveterate and hereditary Enmity to Man: The Poison thus contracted is derived to the whole Kind, and an original Sort of Malignity is propagated from the Serpent to his Brood.

The Serpent therefore having been made the Instrument of so much Mischief to Mankind, is punished by a Degradation of his Nature, whatever he was before, and changed, as to the external Form and Properties of his Kind, now sentenced to creep on the Ground deprived of his Feet, and condemned to eat the Dust. This Change was the Debasement of a most noble Creature, and *Adam* from hence might learn the Greatness of his Sin, when he saw the suborned Instrument of it so severely punished. To us likewise this Punishment in the Form of their Body, together with the strong Antipathy settled between Serpents and Men, are good Documents to remind us always of our original Transgression; to put us upon our Guard against the Wiles and Temptations of the old Serpent, who still continues

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*God's Judgment on the Transgressors.* 55

to tempt us, and maketh his Approaches to us in the old wily serpentine Form; and we must encounter him so far in his own Way, to be wise as Serpents, and so we shall be, and wiser too, if at the same Time we are innocent as Doves.

This first Part of the Curse upon the Serpent relateth only to the Beast itself, and is a lasting Memorial of the Deed committed by him, or thro' him: He is held in Detestation and Abhorrence of Men, and deprived of the Pride and Beauty in which he was created. *Upon thy Belly shalt thou go*, which sheweth that he went in another Manner before, towering and lofty, as his Name importeth: And so far as the Devil still worketh in the Wiles and Insinuations of the Serpent, his Pride is still brought to the basest and meanest Compliances with the Vices and Infirmities of human Nature. He conformeth his Temptations to their Temper, and is at once the Solicitor and Pander of their Lust; and then, with a Baseness suited to the most abject and meanest Mind; he becomes the Accuser, as he had been the Tempter of Men. How art thou fallen, O *Lucifer*, Son of the Morning! How art thou changed from a glorious Saraph to a crawling Worm! *Upon thy Belly shalt thou go, and Dust shalt thou eat all the Days of thy Life.* What is Man's Fate is thus made the Serpent's Food; and as Man by this Temptation was thus brought again to his Dust, out

of which he was formed; the Serpent, his Tempter, is brought also to the Dust, to draw his Length upon it, and to eat it as he crawleth along.

Whether Dust be the proper and only Food of the Serpent or not, we are sure it is his Sawce.

And this Part of the Sentence degradeth him to the meanest Worms, or rather below them; for they feed upon Man himself, yea even on Kings and Princes, when they are laid in the Grave, and turn to their Dust again; but the Serpent licketh up the Dust of the Ground that lieth in the Path, and is trodden under Foot both of Beasts and Men.

The next Part of the Sentence relateth to us and the Serpent jointly, as it is expressed in the Text; *And I will put Enmity between thee and the Woman, and between thy Seed and her Seed: It shall bruise thy Head, and thou shalt bruise his Heel.* The Enmity between Serpents and Men is observed to discover itself in the strongest Antipathies; their Looks and their Blood are Poison to each other; the Serpent darteth away, and flinketh back at the Sight of Man; and Man flieth from nothing with such Precipitation, as from the Face of a Serpent.

The last Clause of the Sentence is properly more mystical and prophetical of a great and more distant Event; *It shall bruise thy Head, and thou shalt bruise his Heel:* But this I must reserve to the second Observation concerning the

*God's Judgment on the Transgressors. 57*

the free Grace and Mercy of God to Mankind, and in the mean Time I proceed to the next Sentence, which is that, secondly, of the Woman. Unto the Woman he said, *I will greatly multiply thy Sorrow and Conception; in Sorrow thou shalt bring forth Children: And thy Desire shall be to thy Husband, and he shall rule over thee.*

This Sentence consisteth of two Parts, one relating to her Children, the other to her Husband. With Reference to Children, the Pains of Child-birth are denounced; *I will greatly multiply thy Sorrow, &c.* There is no other Creature that undergoeth the like Sorrow and Pain, and Danger, both in the Conception and Birth; what they are it is too well known, and surely they must be very great, when the greatest Pains and Sorrows are in Scripture so frequently compared to those of a Woman in Travail. This is another standing Evidence of the Fall: It had not been so, we may certainly conclude, had she continued innocent; and her sinful Desire of the forbidden Fruit seems to be peculiarly punished in her Daughters, by those irregular Appetites, those unaccountable Longings and Loathings to which, during the Time of their Conception especially, they are so remarkably inclined.

The last Part of her Sentence is Subjection to her Husband: This indeed is in some measure the Order and Voice of Nature, and therefore is not in the first subordinate Disposition  
to



## 58 S E R M O N III.

to be esteemed a Punishment. This Superiority of Nature it was Man's Duty to maintain, and he is justly blamed for hearkening to her, where he ought to have controlled her: But however easy the Subjection was before, the woman by yielding to the Temptation had shewn that she was not fit to be trusted to her own Conduct alone; and by presuming to act in so great a Concern without the Advice and Direction of her Husband, she rendered herself more subject and obnoxious to his Commands. *Thy Desire shall be to thy Husband*: Not always a Desire to please him, tho' such it should always be; nor yet always an inviolable Affection for him, tho' such also it should be, but a Desire rising from the Want she found of his Command and Protection: Her Desires should be governed and controlled by his Will, as it follows; *And he shall rule over thee.*

These Words are plain, and it is not my present Design to prove the Duty of Subjection of Wives to their Husbands; only it is monstrous in any Instance to see the Order reversed, and he that cannot maintain his Authority, is justly to be despised. All I shall say is this, that where there is an unnatural Struggle between Husband and Wife for the Command, there this Part of the Sentence becomes a Curse to both. It is only by that free Submission which is required, by a chearful and sweet Compliance, an unconstrained and willing



## God's Judgment on the Transgressors. 59

ling Obedience, that Woman can turn this Part of her Doom into a Blessing.

In the third Place let us see,

3. The Sentence passed upon the Man: *And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkned unto the Voice of thy Wife, and hast eaten of the Tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it, Cursed is the Ground for thy Sake: In Sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the Days of thy Life. Thorns also and Thistles shall it bring forth to thee, and thou shalt eat the Herb of the Field. In the Sweat of thy Face shalt thou eat Bread, till thou return unto the Ground, for out of it wast thou taken; for Dust thou art, and to Dust shalt thou return.*

Throughout this Sentence we learn the great Maliginity, and deadly Effect of Sin; and *Adam* is punished in every Step and Motion towards it, as well as for the Sin itself: *Because thou hast hearkned unto the Voice of thy Wife, and hast eaten.* To be persuaded by her against his clearer and better Knowledge, whether he yielded out of Fondness and Affection, or whether he also were secretly touched with a Desire to be as Gods, it was a great Weakness in him: It was not right in the Sight of God to hearken unto her, more than unto God; but it was great Wickedness, if he aspired to be like the Most High. The Apostle, in requiring the Woman not to usurp Authority over the Man, but to be in Subjection and Silence, gives this Reason: 1 Tim. ii. 13, 14. *For Adam was first formed,*

## 60      S E R M O N    III.

*formed, and then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the Woman being deceived, was in the Transgression.* These Words shew the natural Superiority of the Man over the Woman; Adam was first formed, and then Eve: They shew also, that he fell not by being deceived, but, as God here chargeth him, by hearkening to the Voice of his Wife. Adam was not deceived as the Woman was, but the Woman being deceived, was in the Transgression while he remained yet innocent; nor had he transgressed, had he not hearkened to the Voice of his Wife. The great and righteous Judge therefore assigneth the true Cause of his Transgression; the Woman was deceived by the Serpent, the Man was seduced by the Woman; he hearkened to her Voice, and was persuaded by her to venture, as she had done, and to run the same Doom with her.

After the Reason given, the Sentence proceeds, *Because thou hast hearkened to the Voice of thy Wife, and hast eaten of the Tree, &c. cursed is the Ground for thy Sake.* That the Serpent should be cursed, there is, besides the sovereign Will of God, this Reason, as we have seen, that he was the Devil's Instrument, and so polluted and defiled by the Inmate that possessed him; but the Earth, what had it done? How could it deserve to be cursed for the Sake of Man? The Reason is plain (besides the supreme Pleasure of God to make the Earth barren or fruitful at his Will), the Earth is not punished  
by

*God's Judgment on the Transgressors. 61*

by Barrenness; it is perfectly senseless and passive: But as the Earth was made for Man, and all the Creatures thereon, and as both were given him by God with his Blessing, Man forfeited both the Grant and the Blessing upon his Transgression. The Grant was not absolutely revoked, but the Blessing was recalled, and the Ground was cursed for his Sake. The Sentence on the Earth fell upon *him*, and Man could not then be so sensibly affected in the ordinary Course of his Life, had not the Earth been deprived of its original Fruitfulness and Plenty.

Sin is of deadly Contagion, it blasteth whatsoever it reacheth; and upon Man's Transgression every Thing he touched, and the very Earth he trod on, was soiled and infected by him: Afterwards, as the Wickedness of Man grew great, we find the World, that then was destroyed; and when the Earth had been restored from the Flood, the Inhabitants of the Plain saw not only Men, and their Cities, but even the very Land consumed by Fire from Heaven, for the crying Sins of them that dwelt therein, as *Sodom* and *Gomorrab*. Transgression involveth not only the Transgressors themselves, but their Wives and Children, and all that they have, even their Gold and Silver and Garments, and all that appertaineth unto them, as in the Cases of *Corah*, *Deut. xvi.* and of *Achan*, *Josh. viii.* No Wonder then that the Earth should be cursed for *Adam's* Transgression, when Sin is of such a deadly Nature, that as by Treason,

## 62      S E R M O N    III.

as indeed it is, High Treason against God, the Offenders were at once attainted, and forfeited both Body and Goods.

More particularly and exactly to our present Argument, we are assured that God in the Course of his Judgments *turneth a fruitful Land into Barrenness for the Wickedness of them that dwell therein*, Pſal. cvii. 34. Now this was the Curse for *Adam's Sin; Thorns also, and Thistles, shall it bring forth to thee*: And in this consisted *Adam's* visible Punishment as long as he lived.

The following Part of his Sentence is but the Effect of this; Sorrow always accompanieth a Curse, both as it is a Deprivation of some Blessing, and moreover an Infliction of some Evil. And accordingly what is our Life but Labour and Sorrow? *In Sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the Days of thy Life: In the Sweat of thy Face shalt thou eat Bread.*

I have put the whole together, that we may the better understand the Misery and hard Condition Man had brought himself unto. Is this an Exchange for the Happiness of Paradise? Is the Herb of the Field to be compared with the Tree of Life? Or the Wilderness of the World with the Garden of God? In *Eden Adam* reached out his Arm, and lifted up his Hand towards Heaven for his Food; but when, not contented with all the rest, he put forth his Hand to the forbidden Tree, he is cast out to till the Ground, and to look downwards,

*God's Judgment on the Transgressors. 63*

and labour for his Food, and to eat the Herb with the Beasts of the Field. But the Beasts were maintained without Labour, or if by any, it is by Man's: They gathered up the Herb, and licked up the Grass as it grew, and drank of the Brook as it flowed; with Man it was not so, he must toil and labour, and often in an unthankful Soil; and if he will drink of the Brook in the Way, he must first stoop down to take it, before he can lift up his Head. Even when he tilleth the Ground, Thorns and Thistles shall it bring forth: *In Sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the Days of thy Life.* A grievous Burden this! And surely he was deeply sensible, and greatly afflicted for the woful Exchange he had made.

He had forfeited Paradise, and the first Blessings of God, and was to be cast out into a vast and solitary World, there to till the Ground, and in Sorrow, and in the Sweat of his Brow, to eat his Bread.

This must needs be very grievous to him, that was created for Happiness; Use and Custom, and the common Condition of our Birth, have since made it easier, and more tolerable for his Sons over all the Earth: But it was a dismal Scene to him, to see the Earth cursed for his Sake, the Influences of the Heavens changed, and all Things disposed for Mortality and Sorrow.

The Curse of the Ground indeed was in a great Measure taken off by the Flood, but the Labour



## 64      S E R M O N    III.

Labour and Sorrow, and Vexation of Spirit, still remain, and wax heavier and forer still, as the endless Necessities of Avarice, Luxury, and Pride, increase; but otherwise would Men contain themselves within their necessary Wants and Demands of Nature and Reason, I would observe, that altho' Labour and Sorrow, and the Sweat of his Brow, were an heavy and severe Infliction on our first Parent, they are a great Blessing and Relief to us his Posterity, unless we will abuse the Fruits of our Endeavours, or labour for the Wind. The World cannot subsist without Labour, nor can Innocence be preserved in Idleness: Use and Habit, and every Art and Mastery in our several Studies and Occupations, do now render our Labours easy and pleasant, and like the Functions of a second Nature to us: Yet if here we set up our Rest, and look for Happiness and Ease in this World alone, we shall surely find, that all the Labour which we take under the Sun, is only Vanity, and Vexation of Spirit. Unless we look beyond this World, in Sorrow shall we eat our Bread all the Days of our Life. And further still, tho' we do also eat our Bread in the Sweat of our Face, yet unless God give us his Blessing, it is but lost Labour, that we haste to rise up early, and so late take Rest; for it is he alone that giveth his beloved Sleep. Without God's Blessing then our Labour is in vain, from the Womb to the Grave, till we return again to the Ground.



## *God's Judgment on the Transgressors. 65*

But if we believe in God, and serve him, and have a lively Faith in our Saviour, that Seed of the Woman which hath bruised the Serpent's Head; then we may look forward with Joy and Triumph to our Rest and Reward, and wait with Patience in full Assurance of Hope for a glorious Resurrection, *forasmuch as we know that our Labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.*

But before this Resurrection we must undergo the last Part of the Sentence; we must return to the Ground: *For Dust thou art, and to Dust shalt thou return.*

This in itself is no more than being resolved into the first Principles of our Body; and this Sentence, except by the peculiar Grace and sovereign Dispensation of God, is unavoidable; so fixed and irrevocable was that Sanction: *In the Day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.* For from that Day he begun to be mortal, and from that Instant he might say, as the Apostle did afterwards, *I die daily.*

The Punishment after Death is not here expressed, but in the Promise of Deliverance it is evidently implied. Bruising the Serpent's Head, the despoiling of Principalities and Powers, and destroying the Devil's Empire, do plainly shew, that otherwise Mankind was in Thrall before, and in Bondage to the Prince of Darkness, being taken Captive by him at his Will.

This last Part of the Sentence is by the Gospel Covenant turned into a Blessing, and thro' the Promise here made, *Adam* and all his Posterity were admitted into a Covenant of Pardon and Salvation; and from thenceforth, as well as now under the Gospel, to those who are the Redeemed of the Lord, Death administhereth a Deliverance from Sin and Misery, and a joyful Entrance also into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ*; for upon this Faith in the Seed of the Woman *Adam* and *Eve*, and all the holy Children of their Posterity, were saved before the Flood: Upon the same Faith the Patriarchs were saved after, and by Virtue of this Faith all, that are saved, were saved before the coming of *Christ*, and in this Seed of the Woman are all the Faithful saved since his Coming and Conquest over Death, and him that hath the Power of Death, that is, the Devil.

I come now to consider the second Thing remarkable in this Passage.

II. Namely, The free Grace and Mercy of God extended to Mankind in this evangelical Promise of the Woman's Seed which should *bruise the Serpent's Head*.

But of this great Grace and Mercy I must treat in some further Discourse; and therefore shall conclude at present with this short, but earnest Exhortation: That we would most seriously consider the Misery of our Condition by

*God's Judgment on the Transgressors. 67*

Nature, and our Happiness by Grace; that by *Nature we are the Children of Wrath*, that thro' *Christ*, our Redeemer, *we are made the Children of Grace*, and sanctified by his holy Spirit. We are delivered from the Bondage of Corruption, into the glorious Liberty of the Sons of God; and therefore we must remember the Opposition the Apostle maketh between our natural State and the State of Grace; that Death is the Consequence of the one, as Life is the Reward of the other: *For to be carnally-minded is Death, but to be spiritually-minded is Life and Peace, because the carnal Mind is Enmity against God: For it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the Flesh cannot please God. And they that live after the Flesh shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the Deeds of the Flesh, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God. For ye have not received the Spirit of Bondage again to fear, but ye have received the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father, Rom. viii. 7, 8, 13, 14, 15.*

This blessed Spirit we received at our Baptism, and if we grieve him not, he will according to the most true Promise of our Lord, abide with us for ever, and seal us unto the Day of Redemption, even to that Redemption which we have in the Blood of *Christ*, and thro' Faith in the same. So therefore let us live, as the Redeemed of the Lord, that blessed

# 68      S E R M O N    I I I .

Seed of the Woman, whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious Promises, whereby we are once more made Partakers of the divine Nature, and so an Entrance shall be ministred unto us abundantly into his everlasting Kingdom of Peace and Happiness, of Charity and Glory, even the Kingdom of God, and of *Christ*.

To whom with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, be ascribed all Honour, and Glory, and Blessing, all Praise and Adoration, Might, Majesty, and Dominion, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

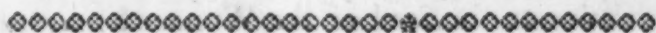


S E R M O N



## S E R M O N IV.

Who the Tempter was, and of  
the Enmity between Him and  
his Seed, and the Woman and  
Her Seed.



GEN. iii. 15.

*I will put Enmity between thee and the  
Woman, and between thy Seed and  
her Seed: It shall bruise thy Head,  
and thou shalt bruise his Heel.*



IN my last Discourse I proposed to  
lay before you these three remark-  
able Points.

I. The great Love and Kindness of God  
towards Mankind in the several Sentences  
pronounced upon those three great Delin-  
quents, the Serpent, the Woman, and the  
Man.

70      S E R M O N   I V .

II. The free Grace and Mercy of God extended to Mankind in this evangelical Promise of *the Seed of the Woman*, which should *bruise the Serpent's Head*.

III. The due Use and Improvement we are to make of this Passage according to the manifold Goodness and Grace of God here promised, and reached out unto us.

I. The first of these I have proposed distinctly, and produced the several Sentences in the Order they were passed, only this last Part relating to the Seed of the Woman I reserved for a larger Consideration, according to the second Thing remarkable from this Passage.

II. Namely, The free Grace and Mercy of God extended to Mankind in this Promise of *the Woman's Seed*, which should *bruise the Serpent's Head*.

Of the natural Antipathy between Serpents and Men, I have spoken already; the Enmity is manifest between them, and so far the first Words have an exact literal Meaning: The next also, with Reference to the Head of the Serpent, and the Heel of Man, may be literally understood as to the whole Species of Serpents and Men. With Regard to Men, as all Creatures have some natural Way of defending themselves, and assaulting their Enemy, it is natural for Man to strike at the  
Serpent's



Serpent's Head, to crush, and to bruise him there. If the Serpent be only cut in sunder, tho' the Parts will not come together, and close again, yet the several Parts will move, and the Head will continue vigorous and strong, and as venomous as ever, perhaps more venomous, as the Poison is sublimated by the Rage and Anguish of the Beast; but crush his Head, and he is dead at once: And when the Head is only bruised, if he be not thereby killed, he is for the present at least disabled. That this is literally the Case, we may learn from Naturalists, and the Writers of Mythology; whose Writings, as they are applied by way of Fable to Fact, are founded in Experience: And so we read, the great *Theban* General encouraged his Troops to fall upon the *Spartans*, who were the chief of their Enemies, by crushing the Head of a Serpent, and shewing them that the Body could do no Hurt when the Head was disabled.

With Reference to Serpents, as Man aimeth chiefly at the Serpent's Head, the Serpent aimeth chiefly at the Heel of Man, and not of Man only, but of any other Creature that comes in the Way where he lieth. Thus *Dan* is compared to a *Serpent in the Way*, and an *Adder in the Path*, that biteth the *Horses Heels*, Gen. xlix. 17. and *Solomon* teaches us, Eccl. x. 8. *Whoso breaketh an Hedge, a Serpent will bite him.*

But besides this literal, there is also a mystical Sense; and from the Serpent, who having before been made the Instrument of Temptation, is now made the Type and Figure of the Devil: The Words are to be transferred to *Satan* himself, and to the Enmity which he beareth to all Mankind, and which all Mankind, unless deluded by him, do bear to him again. Thus they are to be understood of *Satan* and his Brood, that is, his Fellows, and of all the Seed of the Woman in general; and likewise of *Satan*, and the peculiar promised Seed of the Woman, in particular. It will be necessary therefore, for our clearer Search into the true mystical Sense, to take these several Points in Order, and consider first,

1. Whom this Sentence is pronounced upon.

2. The Enmity God here puts between Mankind in general, and the grand Adversary of Mankind; *I will put Enmity between thy Seed and her Seed.*

3. Who this peculiar Seed of the Woman is, which is not only spoken of in general, as including all Mankind; but as pointing to some special Person in particular.

4. The full Meaning and Import of the last Words, *It shall bruise thy Head, and thou shalt bruise his Heel.* First,

1. We may consider whom this Sentence is pronounced upon.

Not

Not upon the Serpent only, but in this Part of it the Tempter himself is more especially designed. The Serpent is a dumb brute Beast, and tho' the most subtle, not capable of Discourse; so that unless he had been informed and possessed by some intelligent Agent, which could form its Voice to an articulate Sound, he could not have uttered a Word of himself. That he was endued with Speech, or that the Tempter at least moved his Tongue, and spoke from within him, is certain from this Relation: Here is a Dialogue and Argument held, not in dumb Show or Emblem, but in Speech and Propositions, however weakly on one Side, and wickedly and fallaciously on the other, the Dispute was managed.

This Dialogue between the Serpent and the Woman hath been made the Subject of much Scoff and Ridicule among those who laugh at Religion, as well as at Superstition; and yet, whatever the great Author designed by the Story, these great Philosophers ought not to lay so much Stress upon, nor to magnify so highly the Parts and Speeches of a Parrot, and so scornfully explode this Discourse of a Serpent, who is certainly as wise and sagacious as any Parrot in either of the *Indies*. But the Probability, at least, of what is here related by *Moses*, I may say the Certainty, is shewn in the unquestioned Communications of this old Serpent with Mankind, by the Answers and Oracles that he uttered. And altho' several of  
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these were no more than the Subornations of the Heathen Priests speaking behind, or from within the Image of their false Gods, whether of *Jupiter* at *Ammon*, or of *Apollo* at *Delphos*; yet the Learned are agreed, that many Answers were given by that infernal Spirit the old Serpent we are speaking of. *Tully* indeed laughs at the Story of a Serpent's speaking; he had possibly some Notice of this Dialogue by an imperfect Tradition, but he laughs also at *Apollo's* speaking *Latin*; as if *Apollo* understood nothing but *Greek*: Whereas it is no great Concession to suppose him a Master of Languages, especially since we do not find he had any Mother Tongue. The Priests indeed might understand no other, and therefore a *Latin* Oracle in *Greece* was an Argument, and had been a more reasonable Conclusion, that the Devil *Apollo* himself, and none of his Priests, delivered it.

But to our present Purpose: Had *Tully* seen this whole Relation as it is here recorded, and been thoroughly acquainted with the Writings of *Moses*, he had possibly not made himself so merry with the Speech of the Serpent. For tho' he was not a Bigot, he was a Man of more Sense and Learning than to be a Freethinker in the modern Way. But to proceed.

Who this Tempter in the Serpent was, we plainly learn from the Scriptures, and not obscurely from the Traditions, Superstitions, and Writings,

Writings, of the Heathen World: For these two Things are evident; one is, that an ancient and general Tradition prevailed, that the first Author of Evil, and the first Rebel against Heaven, appeared in the Shape of a Serpent: The other, that among the earliest Instances of Idolatry, Serpents were worshipped almost every where as sacred. Under that Form the Devil usurped both the Worship and Authority of God, and tyrannized over wretched Men in the most barbarous and cruel Manner. This being notorious throughout the Heathen World, what is only an imperfect and depraved Tradition among them is clear and manifest in the Scriptures. The Devil assumed the Shape of a Serpent, that is, he entered into him, and acted by him; the Serpent therefore is said to have done what was transacted in him by that evil Spirit, who had taken Possession of him: And the Devil thus possessing the Serpent, as he appeared, is himself so called, *Rev. xii. 9. the great Dragon, that old Serpent called the Devil and Satan.* And *Chap. xx. 2.* we read, that the Angel laid hold on *the Dragon, that old Serpent which is the Devil and Satan.* Thus in the Scriptures he is called both the Serpent and the Dragon, as the nearest Resemblance of that Serpent, before he was debased to crawl upon the Ground. So in the Psalms, so in the Prophets, he is set forth by the Name of the Dragon; and under the Appellation of the Serpent *St. Paul* speaketh of him



him in the very Terms of Eve's Confession, 2 Cor. xi. 3. *But I fear, lest by any Means as the Serpent beguiled Eve thro' his Subtilty, so your Minds should be corrupted from the Simplicity that is in Christ.* Under this Name was Sentence first passed upon him, and under these Names of the Serpent, and the Dragon, shall the Sentence so passed be executed; when according to Isa. xxvii. 1. *In that Day the Lord with his sore, and great and strong Sword shall punish Leviathan, the piercing Serpent, even Leviathan that crooked Serpent; and he shall slay the Dragon that is in the Sea.* Accordingly, Rev. xx. 2, 8, 10. the Dragon, that old Serpent the Devil, that deceived the Nations, was cast into the Lake of Fire and Brimstone, to be tormented for ever and ever.

Having seen upon whom the Sentence was pronounced, we may now proceed to that Part of it which we are now upon, and consider,

2. The Enmity which God here putteth between Mankind in general, and the grand Adversary of Mankind the Devil: *I will put Enmity between thee and the Woman, and between thy Seed and her Seed.*

This Enmity is most apparent and undoubted on the Serpent's Part, it being the constant Business and Employment of the Devil to work the Destruction of Men. He is continually tempting and soliciting them to sin, and goeth about like a roaring Lion, seeking whom he may devour. He worketh with  
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*Who the Tempter was, &c.* 77

the Subtilty of the Serpent, and devoureth with the Greediness of a Lion.

But as it is not only said, *I will put Enmity between thee and the Woman*, but also, as the Sentence runneth, *and between thy Seed and her Seed*; it may be proper, as we go along, to search into the full Meaning and Import of this Expression applied to the great Adversary of God and Man under the Name of the Serpent and his Seed, in Opposition to the Woman and her Seed.

Now by the Seed of the Serpent may be understood, in the first Place,

1. The whole Kind or Species either at once subsisting together, or afterwards propagated from one Age to another.

For altho' the natural Serpent propagateth its Kind, and therewith its Enmity to the whole Race of Men; yet the Serpent here intended doth not propagate his Kind in any natural Way; and therefore by his Seed may, in the first Instance, be understood all those of the same Kind with himself, the Spirits of Darkness, over whom he is Chief; even all those that rebelled and fell with him, their supreme Commander in the great Battle; when *there was War in Heaven, and Michael and his Angels fought against the Dragon, and the Dragon fought and his Angels; and prevailed not, neither was their Place found any more in Heaven. And the great Dragon was cast out, that old Serpent*

*Serpent called the Devil and Satan; and his Angels were cast out with him, Rev. xii. 7, 8, 9.*

Now altho' this be a propheticall Vision of what should come to pass hereafter in the Church of *Christ*, yet it is founded upon what had fallen out before; and this second Fight is described according to the Event and Circumstances of the first. They are now cast out of Heaven, and will be cast into Hell for ever, into that *everlasting Fire*, which our blessed Lord assureth us is *prepared for the Devil and his Angels*, Mat. xxv. 41.

These then are the Serpent's Seed, and a numerous Brood they are; begotten, that is, drawn into Rebellion, by the Father of Lies. Thus, in Allusion to that first Rebellion, we are told of the great red Dragon, *And his Tail drew the third Part of the Stars of Heaven*; that is, this great red Dragon, this old Serpent, had seduced so many of the Angels, or Bishops of the Church, into Heresy, as he had before drawn the Stars, those Angels of Heaven, into Rebellion. These evil Angels remain still under his bloody Banner, and at the Time of our Saviour's Ministration upon Earth, to shew at once their Enmity; and their Numbers, speaking in the wretched Man whom they had possessed, and telling *their* Name instead of the Man's, they use a military and hostile Term. *My Name*, say they, *is Legion*, for we are many. What? a Legion in a Man! they  
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are many indeed: A Legion is but a small Detachment of their Number. How many, or rather how many Myriads of them there be, we cannot say; but how many soever they be, they are all of one Kind with the old Serpent; and as he is their Prince, and Leader, he may be called, according to the known Use of the Word, their *Father*, and they his Brood. They are his Seed, and with him they exercise immortal Hatred and Enmity against Mankind; and Mankind, according to this Sentence, should shew their Enmity to them again.

But how manifest soever is the Hatred and Enmity of them towards Man, the Enmity of Man to them is not so evident; so far from it, that many, even among Christians, who are lifted by their baptismal sacramental Vow to have perpetual War with these their spiritual Enemies, seem rather to have laid down their Enmity, and to have taken up a Love and Friendship for them; to have lifted themselves under their Colours, and to fight their Battles, even against themselves, as if they were Confederates with the Devil and his Angels; and boasted, as the Prophet speaketh of the *Jews*, *We have made a Covenant with Death, and with Hell are we at Agreement*, Isa. xxviii. 15. Where is then the Enmity so solemnly here denounced?

It is true, the Enmity seemeth to be taken away on Man's Part, yet it still remaineth radi-

## 80 S E R M O N IV.

radicated and fixed in our Nature. The Devil and his Angels may seduce and beguile Mankind, and disguise themselves under a thousand Forms of Temptation, whether they appear in the various Garbs of Pleasure, Riches, or Honours: *Satan* can transform himself even into an Angel of Light, and his Ministers, the false Apostles, into the Apostles of *Christ*; by these Means the old Serpent and his Brood may first deceive, and then conquer and subdue forlorn and wretched Man. They may deceive Men till they throw off Religion under the Notion of Superstition, and laugh at those Accounts of Devils which they have heard from the Scriptures, till they are convinced that herein the great Deceiver shewed his Masterpiece in hardening them against the Belief of a Tempter, while they were under the very Power of his Temptations.

But otherwise there is in Men a natural Dread and Enmity towards the Devil and his Angels: The Antipathy is not so strong against the natural, as against the spiritual Serpent; and when the Devil had seduced the greatest Part of Mankind to his Worship, it seemeth very strange, but at the same Time it is very true, that their great Motive was founded in their Antipathy, and rose from the Enmity they were persuaded those Demons, whom they worshipped, did bear them. The Cruelty of their Sacrifices did then plainly evince, and the Cruelty of their Sacrifices also, which still  
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are offered in the last discovered Worlds, is an Argument of this great Enmity; when at this Day they offer human Blood, as those of old, even some of God's own People, offered up their Sons and their Daughters unto Devils. And surely these bloody Rites, so generally spread over the Face both of the known, and, as we have since found, of the unknown World, are Demonstrations of the Rage and Fury of these hellish Spirits, and of the Dread and Terror wherewith they had enslaved Mankind, and made them worship, through extremest Fear, the deadliest Objects of their Hate.

For evil Spirits are in themselves hateful, and terrible to Man; and let the ignorant vain Scornor know, that there is no Superstition in entertaining right Notions of them, when thereby we are taught to encounter and overcome them, by serving that God who is able to give us the Victory over all the Powers of Darkness: But the real Superstition is in affecting not to believe the Existence of such Beings, and at the same Time to give themselves up to such a Conduct as is most suitable to the Influences of such Beings. We ought therefore so to consider them, as to keep up the true Enmity against them; and then we shall be most securely guarded against the Power of their Temptations, when we put ourselves under the Guidance of the holy Spirit, and withstand, and renounce, and abhor every evil  
G Thought,



## 82      S E R M O N   IV.

Thought, and Word, and Work, which is Enmity against God. For if we thus resist the Devil, he hath that Property of the Serpent, that he will flee from us.

2. By the Seed of the Serpent may be understood those wicked Men who are called the Children of the Devil. For tho' they be by natural Generation the Seed of the Woman, yet by Choice on their own Part, and by Conquest and Acquisition on the Tempter's, they become the Children of the Devil. His Children they are, whose Work they do, as our blessed Saviour told the *Jews*, John viii. 41. *Ye do the Deeds of your Father.* And when they boasted that God was their Father, he telleth them plainly, Ver. 44. *Ye are of your Father the Devil, and the Lusts of your Father ye will do.* Accordingly, in Allusion to the Serpent, he calleth them by his Name, and crieth out, Mat. xxiii. 33. *Ye Serpents, ye Generation of Vipers, how can ye escape the Damnation of Hell?* And in the same Chapter he uttereth this Denunciation against them; *Wo unto you Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites; for ye compass Sea and Land to make one Profelyte, and when he is made ye make him twofold more the Child of Hell than yourselves.* Conformably to the Doctrine of his Lord, the beloved Disciple teacheth us, 2 Epist. iii. 8, 10. *He that committeth Sin, is of the Devil. In this the Children of God are manifest, and the Children*  
of



*of the Devil: Whosoever doth not Righteousness, is not of God.*

This may suffice to shew who are the Seed of the Serpent; whence we may easily discern who are the Seed of the Woman, in Opposition to the Serpent's Brood.

The Seed of the Serpent and the Seed of the Woman being here opposed in Enmity to each other, it therefore followeth, that if wicked Men be the Seed of the Serpent, good Men are to be understood by the Seed of the Woman.

In the natural Way of Generation, all, both good and bad, are the Seed of the Woman; but bad Men become, in a spiritual Sense, the Seed of the Serpent, and good Men are made the Children of God. The whole Generation of Mankind were originally designed to be the Children of God, and ever since God accepteth none as the Seed of the Woman but those who are his Servants also. It is true, we are now adopted in *Christ Jesus*, and so were all the Faithful from the Foundation of the World: They were received into the same Covenant of the promised Seed; the Dispensations are different, the Covenant is the same, more generally proposed to them, more distinctly declared to us: The Promise then made they embraced by Faith, and by this Faith all the Patriarchs before the Flood, and all the Patriarchs and righteous Men in all Ages and Nations of the World, are saved:

They believed in a Saviour to come, and, as the Apostle to the *Hebrews* teacheth us, *These all, from Abel unto Abraham, died in the Faith, not having received the Promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, Heb. xi. 13.* The same may be applied to *Job*, and all those who, tho' they were not in the same peculiar Covenant with *Abraham*, were yet in the same universal Covenant with *Adam*, and *Noah*, and all their Posterity. To all these we may apply those Words of *St. John i. 10, 12, 13.* concerning *Christ*: *He was in the World, and the World was made by him, and the World knew him not. But as many as received, the general Promise, to them gave he Power, that is, the special Privilege, to become the Sons of God.* But to us the Words are most strictly applicable, *To as many as received him, to them gave he Power to become the Sons of God, even to them which believe on his Name; which were born, not of Blood, nor of the Will of the Flesh, nor of the Will of Man, but of God.* Thus are we the Sons of God thro' his Grace by Faith. Whatever was more generally and implicitly accepted before the Coming of our Saviour, is more explicitly and particularly required of us, both with Respect to Faith, and Obedience; and we are the Sons of God by a more peculiar Regeneration in Baptism. To this Purpose *St. Paul* instructeth the *Galatians, iii. 26.* *Ye are all the Children of God by Faith in Christ Jesus.*

Jesus. And with Respect to Obedience, he requireth of the *Philippians*, i. 27. that their *Conversation be as becometh the Gospel of Christ*; that they be *blameless and harmless, the Sons of God*, ii. 15. And our blessed Lord teacheth; with Respect both to Faith, and Obedience, *John viii. 47. He that is of God, heareth God's Words*, both to believe, and to obey. *St. John*, i Ep. iii. 9. giveth not only the Mark of God's Children, but assigneth also the Reason and Cause of their Obedience. *Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit Sin, for his Seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.* This Seed is the Word of God, *Luke viii. 11.* which is sown in an honest and good Heart, and received by that Faith which worketh by Love: And so by a common Figure of the Effect for the Cause, the good Seed are called *the Children of the Kingdom*, *Mat. xiii. 38.* For when this is sown in our Hearts, we are said to be *born again, not of corruptible Seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever*, i Pet. i. 23.

But when it is said concerning him that is born of God, that he doth not commit Sin, and that he cannot sin; this is not to be understood absolutely, as if such Persons were entirely free and exempted from the Approach of Sin; but it is to be understood of the final Issue and Event of our spiritual Warfare; that those who live in the Faith and Fear, and Love of God, and make his Word the Rule

## 86      S E R M O N   I V .

and Obligation, and Motive of their Obedience; these cannot, howsoever they may fall thro' Infirmary, finally fall away; any more than a Man, howsoever afflicted with the Infirmities of Sicknes, can be said to die, while his Spirit remaineth in him. The Evidence and Assurance that we are the Children of God, is the Spirit, which he hath shed on us abundantly thro' *Jesus Christ* our Saviour; we have therefore *an Unction from the holy One*, 1 John ii. 20. *And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit, which he hath given us*, iii. 24. *Now he which hath anointed us is God, who hath also sealed us, and given us the Earnest of the Spirit in our Hearts*, 2 Cor. i. 21, 22. *For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God: For we have not received the Spirit of Bondage again to fear, but we have received the Spirit of Adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself, beareth Witness with our Spirit, that we are the Children of God*, Rom. viii. 14, 15, 16.

And indeed we have a double Birth, and a double Principle of Life, as our blessed Lord discourseth with *Nicodemus*; *That which is born of the Flesh is Flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit*, John iii. 6. one is the Principle of Life, the other of Death. *For if ye live after the Flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the Deeds of the Flesh, ye shall live*, Rom. viii. 13. *For to be carnally minded is Death, but to be spiritually minded is Life*

*Life and Peace: Because the carnal Mind is Enmity against God, Ver. 6, 7.* Those therefore that live after the Flesh are the Serpent's Seed, and those that live after the Spirit are the Seed of the Woman, and are made the Children of God. In this then the Children of God are manifest, and the Children of the Devil according to this general Part of the Sentence; *I will put Enmity between thee and the Woman, and between thy Seed and her Seed.*

It only remaineth, upon this Head, to see how this Enmity is exercised on the Part of the Serpent and his Seed, and on the Part of the Woman and her Seed.

The Enmity on the Serpent's Side we have in some Measure seen already.

The special Enquiry therefore is concerning the Enmity that is maintained on the Part of the Woman and her Seed, that is, according to the Explication now given on the Part of good Men against evil Men, and against him especially whose Children evil Men are, the old Serpent, the first Seducer, and the great Adversary of Mankind.

The Enmity of wicked to good Men is manifest, for the Ungodly hateth the Righteous, and seeketh Occasion to slay him. Their Hatred extendeth to all Instances of Cruelty and Malice: *The Ungodly seeketh Counsel against the Just, and deviseth craftily against him: The Wicked have drawn out the Sword, and have bent their Bow to cast down the Poor and Needy,*



## 88      S E R M O N    I V.

*and to slay such as are of a right Conversation, Psal. xxxvii. 12. &c. In the secret Places doth he murder the Innocent; his Eyes are set against the Poor, Psal. x. 8. This Enmity our blessed Lord hath set forth at large in the tenth Chapter of St. Matthew, and expresseth it very comprehensively, when he telleth his Disciples, Ver. 22. Ye shall be hated of all Men for my Sake. This is ever the Lot of God's faithful Servants, and as in the Case of Isaac and Ishmael, even so it is now: He that is born after the Flesh, persecuteth him that is born after the Spirit.*

On the other Hand, as the Enmity is pronounced to be mutual, good Men are not only in continual Enmity against their spiritual Enemies the Devil and his Angels, but against all his Confederates also, those Sons of Belial, the Children of Disobedience. This Enmity against the Wicked cannot be more fully and copiously expressed, than in the Language of the Psalmist: *I have hated the Congregation of evil Doers; the blood-thirsty and deceitful Man doth my Soul abhor, Psal. xxvi. 5. Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? And am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee? Yea, I hate them right sore, with a perfect Hatred, and I count them mine Enemies, Psal. cxxxix. 21, 22. And accordingly, Psal. xciv. 16. he soundeth the Trumpet, and calleth, as it were, to Arms: Who will rise up with me against the Wicked? And who will take my Part*  
*against*



*against the evil Doers?* This Enmity between the Righteous and the Wicked hath ever prevailed, and will continue as long as the World endureth: It is founded in the Contrariety and Opposition of their Nature, and their Manners. *For the Flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other,* Gal. v. 17. This Conflict every Man undergoeth, more especially within himself; and according as either prevaleth, he placeth himself on one Side, or the other. If the Flesh prevaleth, and carrieth the Sway over him, he is of the Serpent's Brood, and at Enmity with them who are led by the Spirit; and are therefore the Sons of God.

Before we proceed, it may be proper to look back, and take a Survey of the Ground we have gone over, that we may learn our Duty rising from the Enmity which we ought to bear to our spiritual Enemies the Serpent and his Seed, that is, to the Tempter, the great Adversary of Mankind, all his Agents, Confederates, and Adherents, whether they be evil Angels, or evil Men.

For with Respect to the Devil and his Angels we must remember, that besides the natural Antipathy we have to Evil as such, we have an unconquerable Aversion to the Evil of Pain and Suffering, which yet is the fixed and stated Consequence of all moral Evil. This Evil of Pain is removed and disguised by the Veil and Artifice of Temptation; but if by  
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an Association of those Ideas we used ourselves, at every Approach and Apprehension of Sin, to think of suffering, we should ever descry the Danger thro' the Temptation, and the sure Evil of Pain would be a constant Guard against the Evil of Sin. This Antipathy to every Thing that is painful and afflicting to human Nature will of itself serve to raise in our Minds an Enmity and Aversion to the Authors and Instruments of our Sufferings; and this was one gracious Purpose in the Sentence of Enmity denounced between the Serpent and the Woman, and their Seed, for ever.

We are by Virtue of this Sentence more peculiarly obliged to keep, and exercise this Enmity against these Enemies of our Life and Happiness: This Obligation lieth upon all Mankind, to whom the Promise was originally made; and this Opposition to the Powers of Darkness is a Duty to which all Christians are more particularly and solemnly engaged.

For with Respect to all Mankind, the Sentence is general, the Promise is universal; the Enmity is general between all the Seed of the Woman and the Serpent's Brood; and the Promise of Victory to be obtained by one more eminent than all others, extendeth its Benefits to all the Seed.

But this is more especially the Duty of all Christians; and we ought always to remember our baptismal Vows and Engagements, by which we are enrolled and listed under the  
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great Captain of our Salvation, to fight against the Devil, and all his Agents, and all his Works. He began, and still maintains a Rebellion against God. At first he drew Millions of Angels, even the third Part of the Stars of Heaven to his Side; and since he hath drawn the greatest Part of Mankind also into Confederacy with him. Our blessed Lord, that Seed of the Woman here most eminently promised, undertook our Deliverance, and *for this Purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the Works of the Devil*, 1 John iii. 8. And for this End also he sent his Apostles to the People, and the Gentiles, *to open their Eyes, and to turn them from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God*, Acts xxvi. 18.

As therefore we are the Soldiers and Servants of *Christ*, we have declared perpetual War against his Enemies and ours; we have ranged ourselves under the Cross of *Christ*, and we are manfully to fight under his Banner against Sin, the World, and the Devil; and to continue *Christ's* faithful Soldiers and Servants unto our Lives End.

Thus are we to maintain the War and Enmity with the Seed of the Serpent for ever; and we must always remember, that we have not only our own fleshly Lusts which war against the Soul to subdue, but our spiritual Enemies also, which turn those Lusts, like our own Arms, against us: And therefore we must  
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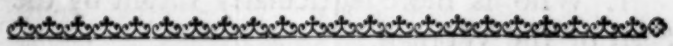
put on the whole Armour of God, that we may be able to stand against the Wiles of the Devil. For we wrestle not against Flesh and Blood only, but against Principalities, against Powers, against the Rulers of the Darkness of this World, against spiritual Wickedness in high Places. Wherefore let us take unto us the whole Armour of God, that we may be able to withstand in the evil Day, and having done all, to stand. Let us stand therefore, having our Loins girt about with Truth, and having on the Breastplate of Righteousness, and on our Feet the Guidance of the Gospel of Peace; with these the Shield of Faith, the Helmet of Salvation, and the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. And so we shall be more than Conquerors, and with the Church Triumphant ever sing, *Blessed be God, who giveth us the Victory through Jesus Christ our Lord!*





## S E R M O N V.

*Jesus*, the promised Seed of the Woman, described in the several Prophecies of a Saviour.



GEN. iii. 15.

— *It shall bruise thy Head, and thou shalt bruise his Heel.*

FTER a full Explication of the several Sentences pronounced upon the Serpent, the Woman, and the Man, in which is manifested the great Love and Kindness of God towards Mankind, I proposed to consider in a more particular Manner this latter Part of the Sentence upon the Serpent, as it conveyeth the evangelical Promise of Pardon and Reconciliation, and setteth before us, in the second Place,

II. The free Grace and Mercy of God in the Redemption of the World.

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I have accordingly made some Progress in this great and important Point, by searching into and explaining the mystical and spiritual Meaning of this Sentence, by shewing who are the Seed of the Serpent and the Seed of the Woman in general; and what that Enmity is which is here fixed, and declared to be between them.

It remaineth, according to the Method laid down in the former Discourses, to consider, first,

1. Who is more particularly meant by the Seed of the Woman.

2. What is to be understood by those Expressions, *It shall bruise thy Head, and thou shalt bruise his Heel.*

These two Points cleared up, and discussed, we shall then proceed to the third and last general Head proposed in these Discourses; namely,

III. The due Use and Improvement we are to make of this Passage according to the manifold Goodness and Grace of God here promised, and reached out unto us.

Forasmuch as this Promise giveth us full Assurance of Pardon and Reconciliation for ourselves, and of Victory and Triumph over our spiritual Enemies: With Reference to the

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1. *First*, By the Seed of the Woman is more particularly meant our Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ*, here first promised, and long since given. The Promise, when first received, was understood of a Saviour, who should deliver Mankind from the Wrath of God, and triumph over Death and the Devil. Accordingly, the great Hope and Ambition of Women in antient Time was, to be the Mother of this holy Seed.

This Promise was originally universal; and till *Cain*, first by Murder, and afterwards by Apostacy, threw himself out of the Church, it had no declared Limitation to one of the Sons of *Adam*, more than to another; but after the Murder of *Abel*, and this Defection of *Cain*, it appeareth to have been settled in the Family of *Seth*, and every Daughter of that Line had equal Expectations of being the Mother of so great a Blessing.

After the Flood the Promise remained with *Noah*, who, as the Apostle to the *Hebrews* witnesseth, became Heir of the Righteousness which is by Faith; and the general Hope continued in his Family till *Ham* was cursed of his Father for his Impiety; and then it continued for some Time among the Daughters of *Shem* and *Japhet*: But when the World began, in a few Years, to be overspread with Idolatry, and it pleased God to take out a Church, and a People for himself from among all the Nations upon Earth, then this Promise was renewed,  
and

and the Family of *Abraham* was chosen for the ascertaining and Completion of it: And altho' the rest of the World had soon lost the distinct Knowledge of the original Promise, or had preserved a general Remembrance of it only in some imperfect and fabulous Traditions mixed and corrupted with their idolatrous Superstitions; yet this was still the great and singular Point referred to by God in all his Revelations; and every After-limitation and Specification of the Promise to one Seed, and Tribe, and Family, above all others, were so many repeated Assurances that the Promise should most surely be fulfilled.

Thus the Promise proceeded from more general Terms to more particular Designments, till at last one Family of one Tribe in one Nation was pointed out many Years before it was accomplished; and then, when the Fulness of Time was come, it was punctually fulfilled in every Part and Circumstance, according to all the Prophecies and Declarations which went before, from this Annunciation to *Eve*, here included in the Serpent's Doom, unto the Annunciation to the Blessed Virgin, the Mother of this promised Seed. Every later Revelation and Prophecy concerning this promised Seed, as they descend in one perpetual Tenor, give Light and Confirmation to the former till the Completion cometh, and cleareth up the Whole, and every Part of this Deduction, from *Adam* unto *Christ*, or rather from *Christ* here promised,

mised, which is the first Stone laid in the Foundation, to *Christ* long since given, which is the last and Corner-stone that finisheth the Building; a Building wonderfully carried on in so many different Ages, and yet so uniform in all its Parts, still growing and rising to Perfection, till we see it at last compleated according to the glorious Model framed and designed in the great Master Builder's Mind.

This Promise was the Life and Support of the Faithful in all Ages. It was not requisite for them to know at what precise Time, and in what special Manner, it should be fulfilled; but these and every other Circumstance were afterwards assigned, as well for Evidence of its Accomplishment, after it shall have been performed, as in the mean Time for so many repeated Assurances, that it should be performed. Upon both these Accounts, for the Comfort and Conviction of Mankind, God was pleased often to renew it, and from Time to Time to reveal it still more and more distinctly to his People.

Two Points are evident from this original and more general Promise: First, That this should be the Seed of the Woman. Secondly, That it should be of the Male Kind; for the Pronoun is properly relative, and hath immediate Reference to Her Seed, as to its Antecedent; and for the other, that it should be of the Male Kind, tho' in the former Part of the Sentence the Seed be spoken of as impersonal,

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yet in the latter Part it is personally spoken of, and appropriated to the Male Issue: *It, the Seed of the Woman, shall bruise thy Head, and thou shalt bruise his Heel*; the Heel of him, who shall be that Seed of the Woman here spoken of.

This it is enough just to mention; but there is another Point, which by the Event we are determined in; which is, that the Person here promised should be the Seed of the Woman, so as not to be in the same Propriety the Seed of the Man. For altho' he, that by Succession of Parents is born of a Woman, may be called the Seed of Man; yet he, that is born of a Woman without the immediate Intervention of a Man, is more peculiarly the Seed of the Woman.

The first Part of the Sentence may be understood, as I have shewn, of the Serpent and all Mankind in general; but this last Part is appropriated to a singular and personal Event: The Victory here foretold is limited to some peculiar Seed, and denoteth a personal Conflict between the Serpent and him.

This, we shall find, agrees to our blessed Saviour alone, and the Singularity of the Seed is pointed out by the several Specialties under which this Promise was renewed and confirmed. So indeed it was understood from the Beginning of some particular Person to be born of a Woman, who should subdue the Serpent, and be the Saviour of the World. Thus all  
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the Daughters of *Eve* hoped, as I observed, each to be the special Parent of this Blessing; and *Eve* herself seemeth to have imagined, that her Firstborn was the promised Seed, when she called his Name *Cain*, and gave this Reason, *I have gotten a Man*, or (as it may more emphatically be rendered) *I have gotten the Man from the Lord*. When afterwards she found herself mistaken, and that she was deprived of *Cain* for his Murder of *Abel*; we find no more Imaginations in her, or any of her Daughters, that she had actually brought forth, but the Imagination continued to prevail with many, that they might possibly bring forth the promised Seed.

Our blessed Lord therefore was most eminently the Seed of the Woman, and especially of the Woman without the Intervention of a Man: For tho' the Woman that bare him, and all her Progenitors, were themselves born in the ordinary Way of Generation, yet he in a most extraordinary Manner was the Seed of the Woman only.

It may be proper therefore, for the settling and assuring our Faith, to deduce this Promise under all the Specialties and Appropriations with which it was successively made, and renewed throughout the several Ages of the World; and then, by the constant Tenor of the Promise, and of the several Prophecies which confirmed it, we shall find it one and the same Promise first given to *Adam*, and re-



newed from Time to Time to his Posterity, the Person promised being still more distinctly pointed out, and described, till the Seed himself appeared, who was thus originally designed.

The Promise was first made, as we have seen, to *Adam*, and from him derived through *Methuselah* to *Noah*, from *Noah* to *Shem*, from *Shem* to the Family of *Abraham*. It descended, as we may say, collaterally, till it was fixed in *Abraham*; for before the Flood all the Posterity of *Adam*, except *Cain*, looked upon themselves as equally entitled to produce this Seed; and after the Flood the Prospect was common to all the Descendants of *Noah*, except *Ham*.

But to *Abraham*, as we find eventually it did, and from *Abraham* it descended in a right Line thro' *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, and *Judah*, and *David*, till it terminated in *Christ* our Lord: For to *Abraham* it was distinctly renewed, and to him it was promised, that in his Seed should all the Nations and Families of the Earth be blessed: We need not go thro' every Recital of the Promise, but because every Renewal of it is introduced with some peculiar Circumstances, and the Promise itself is first given in more general, and afterwards in more particular Terms, it may not be unuseful to take it as it lieth in the several Passages of this Book of *Genesis*.

When God commanded *Abraham* to depart out of his own Country, and from his Kindred, and from his Father's House; among  
many



many others, he encouraged him with this great and singular Blessing; Gen. xii. 3. *In thee shall all the Families of the Earth be blessed.* Afterwards we find the Lord our God in Consultation with himself, whether he should discover unto *Abraham* his Purpose concerning *Sodom*; Gen. xviii. 17, 18. *Shall I hide from Abraham the Thing which I do? Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty Nation, and all the Nations of the Earth shall be blessed in him?* This, tho' not a Promise to *Abraham*, sheweth yet more evidently the fixed and immutable Purpose of God to perform the Promise he had made. In Chap. xvii. 21. it is particularly revealed, that the Covenant shall be established in *Isaac*, who is there promised, and had been promised by Name before, Ver. 19. and again xxi. 12. it is farther declared, that in *Isaac* shall thy Seed be called; which is not meant of his Descendants in general, for they were called after *Jacob* under the Name of *Israel*; but of the special promised Seed, which should spring from *Isaac*, and not from *Ishmael*. Again, upon that glorious Trial of his Faith and Obedience in offering up this Heir of the Promise whom God in that very Regard calleth his Son, his only Son, without any Notice of *Ishmael* at all; the Promise itself is most solemnly renewed, and confirmed by an Oath, Gen. xxii. 16, 17, 18. *By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this Thing, and hast not withheld thy Son,*

*thine only Son: That in blessing I will bless thee,—and in thy Seed shall all the Nations of the Earth be blessed.* As the Promise had been thus repeated, and assured unto *Abraham*, it is also renewed, and assured unto *Isaac*, Gen. xxvi. 3, 4. *I will perform the Oath which I swear unto Abraham thy Father.—And in thy Seed shall all the Nations of the Earth be blessed.* Here I would observe, as likewise in the Promise to *Abraham*, that in it there runneth a double Blessing; one, that *his Seed shall be multiplied as the Stars of Heaven*, and that unto him and his Seed God would give all those Countries wherein he did then sojourn; and therefore that by the Seed which should be so greatly multiplied, and unto which all those Countries should be given, is to be understood his Posterity at large, even all the Sons of *Jacob* and *Joseph*. But by the Seed in which all Nations should be blessed, is to be understood that peculiar Seed, the Lord and Saviour of the World.

Thus in the original Promise there is, as we have seen, a general Division of the whole Seed of the Woman and the Serpent in Enmity to each other; and there is also a special Designation of one peculiar Seed of the Woman, which should *bruise the Serpent's Head*. The Promise thus limited to *Isaac*, is afterwards further made and limited to *Jacob* and his Seed, when God appeared to him in a Vision at *Bethel*; and to the other Blessings of *Abraham*

*ham*

ham added this also: *In thee, and in thy Seed, shall all the Families of the Earth be blessed*, Gen. xxviii. 14.

By *Jacob* it is foretold that this Seed, under the Name of *Shiloh*, should come of the Tribe of *Judah*; Gen. xlix. 10. *The Scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a Lawgiver from between his Feet, until Shiloh come, and unto him shall the Gathering of the People be.*

Here it rested for a Season, and there was no more express Mention of the promised Seed from the Time of *Jacob* unto *David*, except that the Institution of the Passover was an express and standing Type, and the lifting up of the Serpent in the Wilderness a most significant Prefiguration of the Death of the promised Seed, when the Serpent, according to the Denunciation of the Text, should so terribly bruise his Heel.

Here it may be a Question concerning *David*, Whether it was revealed unto him, that the promised Seed should be of his House and Lineage; altho' he prophesieth of *Christ*, of his Birth, of his Sufferings and Death, of his Resurrection and Ascension, and of the Judgment he shall execute in the End of the World. For albeit the second, sixteenth, twenty-second, twenty-fourth, forty-fifth, eighty-ninth, the hundred and tenth, the hundred and eighteenth, and the hundred and thirty-second Psalms (supposing them all to be *David's*), do all of them refer to the Messiah; yet none are so express as

the Promises to *Abraham*, that *he shall descend from the Family of David*; or that *in his Seed shall all the Nations of the Earth be blessed*. In the hundred and tenth Psalm, where he calleth *Christ* his Lord, he doth not intimate that he shall be his Son; and in the hundred and thirty-second Psalm, where he joyfully recites the Mercies of God in giving him Assurance of a perpetual Succession of his Children upon the Throne, provided they were obedient to the Law of God; he looketh himself no farther than to *Solomon* and his Sons: For the Condition is limited to the temporal Kingdom, and reacheth not unto, and could not affect the Kingdom of *Christ*. For this is observable of the Prophets, that they saw no further than the primary and literal Sense in the Particulars before them, tho' in general their Views were enlarged to the Promises and Glory of the Church of *Christ*. So *David* knew that his Lord should be born, and die, and rise again; but he knew not, from ought that appears, that *Christ* should be his Son in so express a Manner as *Abraham* and *Isaac*, and *Jacob* knew, that *Christ* was the promised Seed, and should descend from them.

Hitherto then the promised Seed rested under the more general Designation of the Tribe of *Judah*: The special Limitation to the House of *David* was afterwards more particularly revealed: For not to mention other Places in the Prophets, from *Isaiab*, *Micah*, and *Zecha-*

*Zechariah*, we do most exactly learn the Family he was to spring from; the Time and Place of his Birth; his Death, Resurrection, and Ascension, with several Circumstances relating to them all: These were distinctly foretold, and we have seen them as punctually fulfilled. The Prophecies are equally applied by the Chief Priests and Scribes, and by the Apostles and Evangelists, to *Christ* the Lord; by the Chief Priests to the Messiah, who should come, by the Apostles to *Christ*, who was then come in the Flesh.

The Promise being thus made first in more general Terms, afterwards more particularly limited, and then from Time to Time continued with many special and more peculiar Circumstances, is still the more and more confirmed, and the Seed is so pointed out and described, that it is impossible for any other to take upon him to be that promised Seed, because in one, and in one only, all the appropriate Circumstances could concur: And accordingly, all the Particulars do meet and center in *Christ* alone.

This is the Application I shall make at present, and with this I shall conclude, in shewing how the several Prophecies relating to the promised Seed were fulfilled in *Christ* our Lord.

Thus *St. Paul* deduceth the Promise and Prophecies concerning it from *Abraham* thro' *David* unto *Christ*. Acts xiii. 23—34, &c. Rom. i. 3. *Of this Man's (David's) Seed hath*



## 106 S E R M O N V.

God according to his Promise raised unto Israel a Saviour Jesus.—And we declare unto you glad Tidings, how that the Promise, which was made unto the Fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their Children. I might mention his Argument for Justification by Faith, drawn from the Example of *Abraham*, in the fourth Chapter to the *Romans*, but I shall rather pass on to the ninth Chapter; where, enumerating the many and great Privileges of the *Jews*, among them he reckons these glorious Pre-eminences: *Who are Israelites;—to whom pertain the Promises; whose are the Fathers, and of whom, as concerning the Flesh, Christ came, who is over All, God blessed for ever.* Amen. Ver. 4, 5. But then for a Limitation he tells us, that as the Seed was limited to some special Family, so the Privileges of Grace and Adoption are limited to the true Children of *Abraham*; that is, to those who are his Seed by Faith. To this belongeth the Doctrine in the fourth of the *Romans*, which is fixed and enforced in this: For, as he adds at the sixth and seventh Verses, *All are not Israel which are of Israel: Neither because they are the Seed of Abraham, are they all Children: But in Isaac shall thy Seed be called. That is, they which are the Children of the Flesh, these are not the Children of God, but the Children of the Promise are counted for the Seed.* But though it be said more especially, that *in Isaac shall thy Seed be called*; yet the Promise itself is to a peculiar Seed

Seed to be derived from *Isaac* in the Fulness of Time; and the Benefits of it are to all the Faithful from *Adam* to *Abraham*, and since to all those who are the Children of *Abraham*, that Father of the Faithful, and *Heir of the World, through the Righteousness*, that is by *Faith*, Rom. iv. 13. And so in the third Chapter to the *Galatians* he brings the Whole to a Point: *Now to Abraham and his Seed were the Promises made. He saith not, And to Seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy Seed, which is Christ.* The Conclusion is to us Christians full of all Consolation and Glory: *For ye are all the Children of God by Faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as are baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither Bond nor Free, there is neither Male nor Female: For ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's Seed, and Heirs according to the Promise,* Ver. 26, &c.

Thus then we have deduced this great Article of Faith: The Promise was first in general and more universal Terms, of *the Seed of the Woman, which should bruise the Serpent's Head.* In this indefinite Manner, without any special Limitation of the peculiar Seed, it was given to *Adam*, and delivered down to the Times of *Abraham*. Afterwards it was revealed, that this Seed should be derived from *Abraham* thro' *Isaac* and *Jacob* and *Judah*, till it was fixed in the House and Lineage of *David*,

## 108      S E R M O N   V.

The Limitation of the Seed was not to contract the Benefits of the Promise, but, in the first Place, to manifest God's free Grace and Election in rejecting one, and chusing another, for the Conveyance of these mighty Blessings: In the next Place the Limitation was, as I said, to point out and ascertain the promised Seed; which, as it must be derived in some Course of a genealogical Descent, was by the gradual Limitations, both as to Person and Circumstance, so marked and fixed, that it was certainly known that *Christ* was the promised Seed, tho' it was not acknowledged, when he came, that *Jesus* was the *Christ*. And so the Scribes and Pharisees readily answered, when they were asked, and consulted, that *Christ* is the Son of *David*, and that he should be born in *Bethlehem* of *Judea*: And it is most evident from History for the Time, that they were in full and earnest Expectation of his coming, at the Time when he really came.

There is one Designation more of this promised Seed, that *he should be born of a Virgin, and his Name should be called Immanuel*. Thus *Isaiah*, to comfort the House of *David*, and to raise their drooping Spirits in their extreme Danger and Distress, delivereth this Assurance unto *Abaz*, Chap. vii. Ver. 14. *Behold a Virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call his Name Immanuel*.

The special Prophecies concerning the Condition of his Life, of his Sufferings and Death, having

having been fulfilled in every Part and Circumstance, are so many Attestations that *Jesus* is the *Christ*, the promised Seed; and among these, none more eminently so than this special Declaration concerning his Death and Victory.

But the Consideration of this Conflict between the Serpent and the Seed of the Woman, his Conquest and Triumph by his Death and Sufferings, I must defer to the next Opportunity; only let us remember, in the mean Time, that for this Purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the Works of the Devil. For this Purpose, he took our Nature upon him, Heb. ii. 14. *that thro' Death he might destroy him that hath the Power of Death, that is, the Devil.* And to this End *Christ* both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the Dead and Living, Rom. xiv. 9. Let us therefore be ever faithful and obedient to this Lord of our Lives, and Captain of our Salvation, and ever hearken unto those, who, like the great Apostle to the Gentiles, are sent by him to open our Eyes, and to turn us from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of *Satan* unto God; that we may receive Forgiveness of Sins, and Inheritance among them that are sanctified through Faith in him; to whom be Glory. *Amen.*

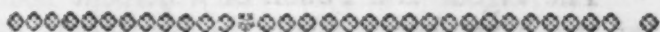
having been enabled in every Part and  
circumstance to receive Attention that  
is due to the power of the Devil; and among  
these, none more important, than the  
Declaration contained in the words and  
spirit of the Constitution of the Church  
which the Spirit and the Word of the  
Lord, his constant and triumphant  
Power, and his Kingdom, shall deliver to the  
next Generation; only let us remember  
the great Truth, that for this Purpose, the  
of God was manifested, that he might deliver  
the Word of the Devil, for the Power  
he took out of Nature upon him, 1st. 2. 3.  
that this should be a great deliverance to the  
the Power of the Devil, that is, the Power of  
the Devil, which is the Power of the Devil,  
and that he might be a great deliverance to the  
and deliver, from the Power of the Devil,  
be ever faithful and obedient to this Power, and  
live, and Captain of our Salvation, and ever  
beation unto those who have the great  
to the Father, and let him to deliver  
 Eyes, and to turn us from darkness to light,  
and from the Power of Satan unto God, that  
we may receive Forgiveness of sins, and that  
the Power of the Devil, and the Kingdom of  
shall be his; to whom be Glory.





## S E R M O N VI.

The Victory of the Promised  
Seed over the Great Enemy.



G E N. iii. 15.

—*It shall bruise thy Head, and thou  
shalt bruise his Heel.*



HAVING in the last Discourse shewed who is more particularly understood by the Seed of the Woman, I come now to lay before you, What is to be understood by the last Words, *It shall bruise thy Head, and thou shalt bruise his Heel.*

This Sentence being pronounced upon the old Serpent, that is, the Devil, the Words foretel the Victory which should be obtained over him by the Seed of the Woman; and therewith the Annoyance, the Stroke, and Wound, he should give the Conqueror during the Time of their Conflict. We have therefore in these Words, first,

I. The

112 S E R M O N VI.

1. The Victory our blessed Lord, the peculiar promised Seed, should obtain over the Serpent, expressed in these Words, *It shall bruise thy Head.*

2. The Wound and Violence this mighty Conqueror should suffer in this Conflict with his Adversary; *And thou shalt bruise his Heel.*

1. The Victory is expressed in these Words, *It shall bruise thy Head.*

The Vigour and Poison of a Serpent lieth, as we have seen, chiefly in his Head; his Wounds are immediately mortal in no other Part, and no surer and more deadly Wound can be given to his Head, than a Bruise: The Head is the commanding and sovereign Member of the Body, from which all the rest take their Direction; it is the Seat of Sensation in all other Animals, and of Reason also in Man: For Reason, the supremest Faculty, is lodged in the Spirit, and the Spirit, so far as we can perceive it local, in the supremest Part. The Head is the natural Emblem of Empire and Dominion, and therefore to bruise the Serpent's Head, is to destroy his Kingdom, and to despoil him of his Power, to rescue Mankind from his Tyranny, and to recover and assert them into the glorious Liberty of the Sons of God.

According to these Allusions, our Saviour's Triumph over the Serpent is described and celebrated in many Passages of the Psalms and the Prophets; where, answerable to his Power, Stile, Title, or Denomination in several Countries,

tries, this Serpent is variously represented; and under all those different Appellations the great Enemy of Mankind is plainly understood and intended. In the Psalms he is designed under the Name of *Leviathan*, and the *Dragon*; the Affinity in Nature between the Serpent and the Dragon, I have mentioned already; and indeed it became proverbial among the Ancients, that a Serpent, by devouring his Kind, became a Dragon: The great Dragon, that cruel Adversary of Mankind, is called after the Names of those Creatures that are most fierce and terrible, whose Habitation is represented to be not only in the most dismal and dreadful Solitudes, but even in Hell itself. So the *Psalmist*, xlv. 19. speaketh of the Place of Dragons, and presently joineth to it the Shadow of Death. In the lxxivth Psalm, the Psalmist intercedeth for the People, and addresseth himself unto God for Deliverance under their great Distress, by remembering that signal Deliverance from the Hand of *Pharaoh*, when their Enemies were overwhelmed in the *Red Sea*: And then, if we take the *Egyptian* Bondage and Deliverance to be typical of our spiritual Bondage to the Powers of Darkness, and of our Deliverance from them by *Christ* our Saviour; we may well apply the Words to our most mighty and most merciful Redeemer, their great Deliverer and ours; for they do admirably express the Triumph of our Lord over the Devil and his Angels: *Thou didst divide the Sea by thy Strength,*

*thou brakest the Heads of the Dragons in the Waters, thou brakest the Heads of Leviathan in Pieces.* This Interpretation is confirmed by *Ezekiel xxix. 3.* where *Pharaoh, King of Egypt,* who then reigned, is called *the great Dragon, that lieth in the midst of his Rivers, which hath said, My River is my own, and I have made it for myself.* To this his proud Boasting and Blasphemy, God thus replieth by his Prophet, answerable to the Words of the Psalm last cited; where it is said, *Thou gavest him Leviathan, that is, Pharaoh, who was drowned in the Red Sea, to be Meat for thy People in the Wilderness, and this is the Denunciation,—I will bring thee up out of the midst of thy Rivers,—I will throw thee up, and leave thee in the Wilderness,—I have given thee for Meat (not to his People indeed, but) to the Beasts of the Field, and to the Fowls of Heaven.* The *xcii. 13.* celebrates our Saviour's Triumph in the same exalted Language. *Thou shalt tread upon the Lion and the Adder; the young Lion and the Dragon shalt thou trample under Feet.* The Words just before are applied by the Devil himself to our Saviour when he tempted him in the Desert. *He shall give his Angels Charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy Ways. They shall bear thee up in their Hands, lest thou dash thy Foot against a Stone.* An admirable Text this, and an admirable Argument from it, to persuade the blessed *Jesus* to cast himself down from a Pinnacle of the Temple: I would observe, however, that this  
very

very Tempter is the Lion and the Dragon there spoken of; but as he teacheth his Disciples to do, he citeth no more of the Psalm than he thinketh for his Purpose, and suppresseth the Words that follow, and concealeth the Prophecy, which denounceth his Confusion, and foretellet the Conquest of our Saviour over him. The same Triumph is foretold also by *Isaiah*, xxvii. 1. *In that Day the Lord with his sore and great and strong Sword shall punish Leviathan, the piercing Serpent: Even Leviathan, that crooked Serpent, and he shall slay the Dragon that is in the Sea.* And thus also, in the same victorious Strain, the Church looketh up to her Saviour, and asketh this triumphant Question of his almighty Arm: *Awake, awake, put on Strength, O Arm of the Lord.—Art not thou It, that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the Dragon?* In the Prophecies of *Isaiah* and *Jeremiah*, *Babylon* is called an Habitation and a Dwelling for Dragons, *Isa.* xiii. 22. xxxiv. 13. *Jer.* li. 37. and in the Book of *Revelations*, xviii. 2. of mystical *Babylon* it is said, *Babylon the Great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the Habitation of Devils.*

In the New Testament the Evidence is clear, and shews, that the Dragon is that old Serpent called the Devil and *Satan*; I shall now re-enforce it, to shew our Saviour's Victory and Triumph over him, when, according to this Promise, the Seed of the Woman did bruise the Serpent's Head.



## 116 S E R M O N VI.

Our blessed Lord, in sure Prospect of his Victory, telleth his Disciples, *Luke x. 18.* when they returned, and reported with Joy, saying, *Lord, even the Devils are subject to us through thy Name, I beheld Satan as Lightning fall from Heaven:* And in Consequence of his Victory he addeth, *Ver. 19. Behold I give unto you Power to tread on Serpents and Scorpions, and over all the Power of the Enemy; and nothing shall by any Means hurt you.* Thus his own Power he communicateth to them. For to cite once more, *Psal. xci. 13. They also shall tread on the Lion and the Adder; the young Lion and the Dragon shall they trample under their Feet.* This Superiority and Dominion over all the Powers of the Enemy is again granted and renewed to his Disciples after his Passion. *Mark xvi. 17, 18. And these Signs shall follow them that believe; in my Name shall they cast out Devils, they shall speak with new Tongues: They shall take up Serpents, and if they drink any deadly Thing, it shall not hurt them.* And in this Confidence *St. Paul* assureth the *Romans*, *xvi. 20. in Expressions correspondent to this Promise of the Seed of the Woman; The God of Peace shall bruise Satan under your Feet shortly.*

In this Manner do the Scriptures celebrate the Victory and Triumph of our Lord over the old Serpent, the Enemy of God and Man. Our blessed Lord is that Seed of the Woman, which should bruise the Serpent's Head: And the

the Apostle to the *Hebrews* teacheth us, that *Forasmuch as the Children are Partakers of Flesh and Blood, he also himself likewise took Part of the same, that through Death he might destroy him that had the Power of Death, that is, the Devil, and deliver them who through Fear of Death were all their Life-time subject to Bondage.* For verily he took not on him the Nature of Angels, but he took on him the Seed of Abraham, Heb. ii. 14, 15, 16. And St. *John*, 1 Ep. iii. 8. declareth, that *for this Purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the Works of the Devil.*

How far, and in what Manner this Prophecy, concerning the Seed of the Woman, hath been fulfilled, is to be determined by the Evidence of Facts, and from the State of the World since the Coming of *Christ*, compared with the State and Condition of Mankind before his Coming.

I shall not enter into a large Field, or an historical Deduction, but it may be sufficient to observe, as we go along, that from the very Time of this Sentence pronounced upon the Serpent, the Devil was laid under a powerful Restraint; nor was he able then (as he is not since) to hurt God's faithful Servants but by the Permission of God himself, for the Trial of their Patience, their Faith, and Obedience, as in the Case of *Job*; or for the temporal Punishment of Sin, as in the Case of *David*, when he numbered the People;

## 118 S E R M O N VI.

or for the humbling, repressing, and restraining the Pride of Man, lest he should be too much exalted by the distinguishing Favours of God; as in the Case of *St. Paul*, to whom was given *a Thorn in the Flesh, the Messenger of Satan, to buffet him, lest he should be exalted above measure*, through the abundance of Revelations that had been vouchsafed unto him, *2 Cor. xii. 7.*

Our Saviour is the Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World, and Pardon was open immediately, as soon as the Promise was made: Mankind indeed, before the Flood, had corrupted themselves to the greatest Degrees of Violence; and every Imagination of the Thoughts of his Heart was only Evil continually: After the Flood, within less than three hundred Years, while *Noah* was yet alive, Idolatry began to prevail, and in a few Years, long before the Death of *Shem*, it had overspread the Face of the whole Earth: And if we suppose the Corruption general when God called *Abraham*, the Defection was universal almost threescore Years before *Noah* died; for so long, at least, it was before his Death that God had called *Abraham*, and so long exactly it was before *Noah* died, that God renewed this gracious Promise to *Abraham*; assuring him, that in his Seed *shall all the Families of the Earth be blessed*, *Gen. xii. 3.* From this Time, Idolatry and Wickedness spread more and more, and the Devil had erected almost an universal Mo-

Monarchy in the World; but upon the Appearance of *Christ*, his Empire began presently to shake; upon our Saviour's Entrance on his Ministry the Devils were immediately subject unto him; and to his Disciples also, thro' his Name. They publickly owned his Dominion, and confessed him to be the Son of God. Upon his Birth, and especially at his Death, their Oracles failed; and many Years after it was notorious, and made the Subject of an open Challenge, that upon Adjuration in the Name of *Christ*, they were forced to confess themselves Devils, and to depart from the Bodies they had possessed: Where Christianity hath prevailed, his Worship hath been every-where abolished; and where the Light of the Gospel hath once shined, albeit for the great Sins and Provocations of Christians it hath pleased God, in his just Judgment, to remove their Candlesticks, and dissolve those Churches, as he did the seven famous Churches of *Asia*; yet Paganism hath never returned, nor hath diabolical Worship been any where restored.

It is true, in those dark Corners of the Earth which have never yet been enlightened by the Gospel, there, in those remotest Parts of his old Dominions, he still maintaineth his Empire; and from the Condition of those miserable Countries we may learn the Condition of the World before: That the Nations of old, those ancient Cities of the East, and especially those more modern Cities of ancient *Greece*

and *Rome*, that these boasted themselves to be more polite and learned than the barbarous People, as they arrogantly and ignorantly called all the World besides; this maketh no Difference, except to their great Disadvantage upon the Comparifon: For their Idolatry was as grofs, and their religious Rites were as bloody and obscene, as those of the most ignorant Parts of the World. And from the Eastern and Western History we may learn, how absolutely the Devil reigned over the greatest and most knowing People of the Heathen World; while it is no less certain than observable, that from the East those vain Boasters the *Greeks* derived at once their Idolatry and their Learning.

That in Christian Countries Wickedness doth still mightily prevail, this is owing to the Sloth and Negligence, and Corruption of Christians themselves; for *Christ's* Religion maketh no violent Change in our Nature: It enableth us, through the Grace of God, to work a great Change in our Manners; for the Grace of God, tho' it reneweth the Mind, and purifieth the Heart, putteth no Force, nor doth any Violence to the Will. *Christ's* visible Church is not a Kingdom of Saints, and as of old among God's own chosen People the Devil interposed, and gained his Votaries and Servants, and prevailed almost to an universal Defection and Apostacy of the Tribes; in the Christian Church he hath been able also to  
form



form considerable Strengths and Parties thro' the Lusts and Corruptions of Men. Tho' his own Worship be entirely abolished, yet he hath watched, and taken his Advantages, and hath abused the Devotion and Superstition of Christians, and thereby led many Multitudes and Nations into another Kind of Idolatry, and from himself and his Angels hath transferred their Worship to the Saints and Angels of God. The Images are still of the same Materials, tho' the Form and Figure of them be altered; they are still Gold and Silver, Wood and Stone, the Work of Mens Hands, what or whomsoever they represent: The Objects indeed are changed from infernal Spirits to celestial Glories; but still from the meanest Saint to the Mother of God, the blessed Virgin herself, it is Idolatry, it is Creature-worship, that is given. Nay, among us, and several Parts of the Christian World besides, he hath advanced and improved so far and refined, as out of Fear of Idolatry to drive Men into Idolatry, by making them Idolaters even towards their Saviour himself; inducing some to worship him by Images, as the *Papists*; and others to worship him as a Creature, as the *Arians* and *Soci-nians*.

To all these we may add the Spirit of Persecution and Infidelity, of Licentiousness and Bigotry, which he hath raised, or rather let loose among us: And it is hard to say which of them rageth with the greater Fury against  
*Christ*

*Christ* and his Church, the Bigot, or the Infidel; the Believers of Transubstantiation, or the Unbelievers of the Christian Faith. By these bad Influences, and these evil Instruments, he can bruise the Heel, tho' he cannot hurt the Head; he can afflict the Church, tho' he cannot destroy it: And altho' by the just Judgment of God he be let loose for a thousand Years, yet the Church of *Christ* shall stand for ever, and the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against her.

This leadeth to the last Point and Part of the Sentence,

2. *Thou shalt bruise his Heel.*

This hath Reference to our blessed Lord, as he is more eminently the peculiar Seed of the Woman; and to all his faithful Servants also, as opposed to the Seed of the Serpent: To him, as naked and alone, he encountered all the Rage and Malice of the Devil; to his Disciples as they are his Brethren, the Sons of God, and with him Coheirs of his Kingdom; and particularly, as in this militant State, they are Members of his Body the Church, and subject therefore, as their Head had been, to all the various Temptations and Assaults of the Enemy. With Regard to himself, these Words foretel the Conflict he should undergo, and the Despite his Adversary should do him, while he seemed to prevail over him unto Death, even the Death of the Cross. With Regard to the Seed of the Woman,

Woman in general, in Opposition to the Serpent's Brood, this signifieth the Enmity and Hatred of evil Spirits and evil Men to good; the Wiles and Temptations of the Devil, by which he seduceth Men into Sin; his Malice also, and Cruelty, in bringing upon them Persecutions, and Tortures, and Death. And thus, tho' our Redeemer hath conquered Death, and Hell, and the Grave; tho' himself be now far out of their Reach, above all Principalities and Powers, and every Name that is named; yet still he may be said to suffer in his Members: Thus the old Serpent may still bruise his Heel, in afflicting the very least and lowest Members of his Church.

But however the Sentence may be extended to the Body, our blessed Lord, he is truly, and more especially the Seed of the Woman; he is the great Captain of our Salvation, who entered the Lists, and maintained the Fight alone against all the Powers of Darkness: For, as he testifieth of himself, and witnessed before *Pontius Pilate* a good Confession, he declareth, *To this End was I born, and for this Cause came I into the World, that I should bear Witness unto the Truth*, John xviii. 37. 1 Tim. vi. 13. To the Truth he bore Witness accordingly, and thereby confounded the Father of Lies, while he patiently submitted to Sufferings and to Death, and thereby verified all the Prophecies which went before of him. Upon this Account he asketh the two Disciples, as they went  
to

to *Emmaus*, Ought not Christ to suffer these Things, and to enter into his Glory? Luke xxiv. 26. For to this End, as St. Paul teacheth us, Christ both died, and rose again, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the Dead and Living, Rom. xiv. 9. In like manner the Apostle to the *Hebrews* teacheth us, concerning this Seed of the Woman, as we have seen before, Forasmuch then as the Children are Partakers of Flesh and Blood, he also himself likewise took Part of the same, that through Death he might destroy him that had the Power of Death, that is, the Devil. It is true the Serpent, in a most cruel and insidious Manner, betrayed this Seed of the Woman, and afflicted him unto Death; but even in Death he bruised the Serpent's Head: When the Serpent more sorely bruised his Heel, then, when he was nailed to the Cross, and in the most exquisite Torments gave up the Ghost, even then he conquered and subdued the Dragon; by his Cross and Passion he triumphed over all the Powers of Darknes; in this Sign he conquered, and under the same he leadeth us to Conquest.

For in like manner, according to the larger and more general Sense of the Woman's Seed, his faithful Servants do also triumph: The Serpent may, as we have seen, bruise their Heel by Temptations, by Persecutions, and by Death; but they shall bruise his Head. They look unto *Jesus*, the Author and Finisher of their

their Faith; and they follow the great Captain of their Salvation, who was made perfect thro' Sufferings: They are planted together in the Likeness of his Death, and shall be also in the Likeness of his Resurrection; they suffer with him, believing that they shall also be glorified together. These are the Souls *under the Altar of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the Testimony which they held*, Rev. vi. 9. *These are they which came out of great Tribulation, and have washed their Robes, and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb*, vii. 14. Those also who keep the Faith and Testimony of Jesus, who receive not the Mark of the Beast, and are not ashamed of the Cross of Christ; who withstand and repel all the Temptations and Assaults of the Devil, and dare be Christians, notwithstanding all the Scorn and Derision of those who *blaspheme that worthy Name by which we are called*, James ii. 7. these also shall reign with their Lord in Glory. Those likewise who have been foiled by Temptations, and are bruised in the Heel, *when, in the Language of the Psalmist, the Iniquity of their Heels compasseth them about*, Psal. xlix. 5. these also, if they repent and return, shall bruise the Serpent's Head, and be Conquerors in the End; they shall overcome the grand Adversary and Accuser of the Brethren by the Word of their Testimony, and by the Blood of the Lamb.

Thus



## 126      S E R M O N VI.

Thus *Christ* himself, and all his faithful Members the Seed of the Woman, shall triumph over the Serpent and his Seed for ever; and altho' in the Discharge of our Duty, and in keeping the Faith and Testimony of *Jesus*, the Serpent and his Brood, evil Men, and evil Angels, may sorely afflict, and tempt and torment the Seed of the Woman, so as most grievously to bruise their Heels, and sometimes to make them fall, and thro' the Fear and Frailty of their Nature, with *Peter*, even to deny their Master; yet the Seed of the Woman shall prevail in the End: They shall recover, and rise again, tho' they fall seven Times a Day. For *to their own Master*, the Lord *Jesus*, *they stand or fall; yea, they shall be bolden up: For God is able to make them stand*, Rom. xiv.

4. For while they maintain the Combat, or having been put to Flight, they rally and return again to the Charge, they shall prevail and conquer thro' the Grace of God, and thro' the Power of his Might. The Heel, the frail and mortal Part, shall at last become invulnerable, or the Shield of Faith shall cover them; it shall quench all the fiery Darts of the wicked One; they shall go out, and be extinct as fast as they fly upon it, as the Sparks that fly out, and die upon the Hearth: The Breastplate of Righteousness, and the Helmet of Salvation, shall defend them; and the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, and sharper than any two-edged Sword, shall cut in

under every Weapon that is formed against us.

For a Conclusion therefore, in the first Place,

1. From the Consideration of our own Weakness, Frailty, and Corruption, let us look up unto God for his Grace and Assistance in all our Trials and Temptations: This Life is a State of Probation, and the whole Course of it is a continual Warfare against our spiritual Enemies the World, the Flesh, and the Devil. He it is, who ten thousand Times more wily and subtle than the natural Serpent, doth ever work, where he can prevail, Man's Destruction from himself; and maketh Use of the World, and our own Flesh, to assault and betray us.

We are therefore to watch, and to guard against his most distant Approaches, lest we be circumvented by the Wiles, and fall into the Snare of the Devil, like those heedless and silly People, *who are taken Captive by him at his Will*, 2 Tim. ii. 26.

It is our Duty therefore to be ever cautious and circumspect, and always on our Guard, *lest Satan should get an Advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his Devices*, 2 Cor. ii. 11.

Him we must resist stedfast in the Faith, *neither must we give place to the Devil*, no not for a Moment, Eph. iv. 27. And we have this Encouragement, if we resist him, he will flee from us. *Be sober, therefore, be vigilant, because your Adversary the Devil, as a roaring Lion,*

## 128      S E R M O N VI.

*Lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour, 1 Pet. v. 8.* This Exhortation is particularly given with Regard to the Persecutions which the Church then laboured under; and as Faith is our strongest Support next to the Grace of God, in that Time of the fiery Trial; Faith is also our surest Guard, and Support, and Refuge, in all manner of Trials and Temptations: And while we continue stedfast in the Faith, awake and attentive to every Part of our Duty, we shall not listen to the softer and more alluring Temptations of the Flesh, nor be moved from our Stedfastness by the rougher and more terrible Assaults of Sufferings, and Danger, and Death. Of ourselves, indeed, we are weak and helpless, and we must acknowledge, with equal Truth and Humility, that we are not sufficient of ourselves, but our Sufficiency is of God: His Grace is sufficient for us; for his Strength is made perfect in Weakness. In all our Trials and Temptations therefore let us come boldly to the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain Mercy, and find Grace to help in Time of Need, through Jesus Christ our Lord: For we have not an High-priest which cannot be touched with the Feeling of our Infirmities; but was in all Things tempted like as we are, yet without Sin, Heb. iv. 15, 16. For as it behoved him to be, he was in all Things made like unto his Brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High-priest in Things pertaining to God, to make Reconciliation for

*Our Saviour's Victory.* 129

*for the Sins of the People: For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted, Heb. ii. 17, 18.*

2. As it hath pleased God, when he put this Enmity between the Serpent and the Seed of the Woman, to infuse into our Hearts a new Principle of Life and Purity by his holy Spirit, whereby we are enabled to encounter and overcome the Seed of the Serpent; it is our Duty, our Happiness, and Glory, to receive, and improve, and cultivate that blessed Seed, which is sown in our Hearts, and then, like Corn sown upon good Ground, in an honest and good Heart, they will bring forth Fruit with Patience, even in the midst of Persecutions, Afflictions, and Distress, *Luke viii.* For they shall be watered with the Dew of God's holy Spirit, and they shall drink of that Water which our Lord shall give them, even of that Fountain which in them is *a Well of Water springing up into everlasting Life, John iv. 14.*

This is the Seed, the Unction, the Anointing, which we received at our Baptism, which abideth with us, and preserveth us from the Contagion and Malignity of Sin, which overpowereth and expelleth the Poison of our corrupted Nature, which killeth the viperous Brood, and purifieth our Hearts, and enlighteneth our Minds; and as by Baptism we are born again, God, as at our first Creation, doth by his holy Spirit breathe again into us the Breath of Life, and Immortality: For he

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which

130      S E R M O N   VI.

*which stablisheth us in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given the Earnest of the Spirit in our Hearts, 2 Cor. i. 21, 22. even that holy Spirit whereby we are sealed unto the Day of Redemption, through Jesus Christ our Lord. To whom with the Father and the same blessed Spirit of Truth, and Holiness, and Love, be ascribed all Glory; and Blessing, and Praise; all Might, Majesty, and Dominion, for ever and ever. Amen.*



S E R M O N





## S E R M O N VII.

The Free Grace and Mercy of  
God in the Redemption of  
Mankind by the Promised  
Seed; with the due Use and  
Improvement of the Do-  
ctrine.



ROM. iii. 23, 24.

*For All have sinned, and come short  
of the Glory of God;  
Being justified freely by his Grace,  
through the Redemption that is in  
Jesus Christ.*

N the several Discourses I have hi-  
therto delivered concerning the  
Creation, and the Fall of Man, I  
have all along had an Eye to his  
Redemption; and in setting forth the Pro-  
ceedings of the great and righteous Judge

132 S E R M O N VII.

upon the Transgression and Fall of Man, I proposed to lay before you these two remarkable and important Points.

I. The great Love and Kindness of God towards Mankind in the several Sentences pronounced upon those three great Delinquents, the Serpent, the Woman, and the Man.

II. The free Grace and Mercy of God extended to Mankind in this evangelical Promise of *the Seed of the Woman*, which should *bruise the Serpent's Head*.

And thirdly I proposed,

III. To represent to you the due Use and Improvement we are to make of the Passages then discussed upon, according to the great Goodness and Grace of God therein promised, and reached out unto us.

I. The first of these I have fully treated, and shewn, how Mercy is mixed with, and rejoiceth against Judgment, in the three Sentences pronounced upon the three grand Delinquents, the Serpent, the Woman, and the Man.

II. The second I have also opened to you, in setting forth and explaining this evangelical Promise of the Woman's Seed, which should  
*bruise*

*bruise the Serpent's Head.* But altho' the free Grace and Mercy of God hath appeared throughout the whole Course of the evangelical Promise, yet a more particular Consideration of it will be very proper to excite in us the great Duties of Thankfulness and Obedience, which are the best Returns we can make unto our most gracious Lord for all the Benefits he hath done unto us.

What was thus promised at the Beginning, was fully executed and performed in the fixed and appointed Time; and in the mean While, all those who lived before the Completion of it were equally entitled to all the Grace and Privilege intended by it, with those who have lived since the Coming of this Promised Seed. All is to be ascribed to the free Grace and Mercy of God in *Christ Jesus* our Lord, *for we All have sinned, and come short of the Glory of God, being justified freely by his Grace, thro' the Redemption that is in Jesus Christ.*

We are all in a lost and forlorn Condition, derived from a tainted and corrupt Original, born in Sin, and the Children of Wrath; we are fallen short of the Glory for which, in the Creation of our first Parents, we were originally designed; we partake of their Condition, and are included in their Doom, as we are Partakers of their Nature. The Contagion of Sin is derived to us with our Being, and the Continuance of Life is a Multiplication of Transgression; our mortal Eyes cannot bear

## 134 S E R M O N VII.

the Brightness, nor our sinful Eyes the Purity of God's Glory. It is thro' *Christ Jesus*, our Mediator and Redeemer, that we are delivered from Death and Despair, and restored from Darkness to Light, and rejoice in the Hope of the Glory of God. *For all have sinned, and come short of the Glory of God; being justified freely by his Grace, through the Redemption that is in Jesus Christ.*

These Words I shall treat with special Reference to our Redemption by the promised Seed, according to the Explication and Doctrines laid down in the former Discourses upon the Creation and Fall of Man; wherein the free Grace and Mercy of God are wonderfully manifested to the Sons of Men, and will be further manifest in a more particular Consideration of it, as we are *justified freely by his Grace, through the Redemption that is in Jesus Christ.*

I will therefore more distinctly propose the great Mercy and free Grace of God in this gracious Promise, as they appear most conspicuously first,

1. In the Promise itself. And
2. In the Circumstances of it.

1. For the Promise itself, it is of Pardon and Salvation to *Adam* and his Posterity, thro' the Seed of the Woman, in which all the Families, and all the Nations of the Earth, should be blessed. It carrieth Mercy in it, as it offereth Pardon, and Grace as it assureth Happiness.

But

*The free Grace of God.* 135

But without insisting too nicely on such a Distinction, Grace and Mercy are both extended in this Promise of Pardon and Salvation. That they are the free Grace and Mercy of God, manifestly appears from the State and Condition of Man, who upon his Transgression had no Title, but to the Punishment then due unto him: He could not claim them in Justice or Right, and Grace is no more Grace, and Mercy is no more Mercy, if they be constrained. For, as the Apostle argueth Rom. iv. 4. xi. 6. *To him that worketh, the Reward is not of Grace, but of Debt: But if it be by Grace, then it is no more of Works: Otherwise Grace is no more Grace: But if it be of Works, then it is no more Grace, otherwise Work is no more Work.* Be it so then, that such as our Works are, such is our Reward, or our Due. If we offer this as our Plea, and are willing to join in this Issue, what can we expect, but a Sentence of Condemnation? If we insist upon strict Justice, Justice will reward every one according to his Works; and then for our Works, we may see what is due unto us. But if we look upon ourselves as Transgressors, and will argue upon the Notion of Pardon and Reconciliation, it must be an Act of Grace; and the receiving us to Favour, and entituling us again upon any Terms to Happiness, is an Act of greater Grace: For it is one Thing to remit the Execution of a Sentence, it is another to advance the Criminal to Glory; both these



## 136 S E R M O N VII.

therefore are of Grace: And it is to our exceeding Comfort that we can say, *Where Sin abounded, Grace did much more abound*, Rom. v. 20. This is the Doctrine St. *Paul* every-where teacheth in his Epistles, and particularly in the Comparison which in the Place last cited he maketh between our Fall in *Adam*, and our Reconciliation in *Christ*. There it is called *the Gift, the free Gift*, and *the Grace of God*: The Mercy is great, as the Grace is free; and the Grace again as great as the Mercy. And in this especially was manifested the Love of God towards us, that while we were yet Enemies, yet Sinners, *Christ* died for us; and therefore Pardon and Reconciliation are the pure Effects of the divine Goodness and Compassion.

But the Greatness of this Mercy, and the Freeness of this Grace, will appear still more clearly and distinctly, if we consider

2. *Secondly*, The Nature, Circumstances, and Manner of this Promise first made to *Adam*, repeated to the Fathers, and fulfilled to us their Children. And first,

1. We may observe, that the Promise was made to *Adam* upon the very Instant and Act of his Transgression, while he had the Guilt and Terror of his Sin before his Eyes, without any Sense of Repentance, and without any Prospect but of Punishment; while the Meat was yet in their Mouth, the Mercy, and not (as they might expect) the Wrath of God, came upon them. They had just transgressed  
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the only exprefs Command, the fingle folemn Prohibition that had been given, under the higheft and fevereft Penalties; and they flood guilty, and felf-condemned, in the Prefence of their Judge; and therefore we muft for ever admire and adore the great Mercy of God in promifing Forgiveness before he proceeded to Sentence. When they expected Condemnation, they received a Pardon; the Judgment upon the Serpent conveyed Salvation to them; when their great Adverfary was sentenced, in the very Sentence a Saviour was promifed: They heard Destruction pronounced upon the Tempter, and Deliverance affured unto themfelves before they received their own Doom from the Mouth of him, who had now made himfelf their Saviour, as well as their Judge. The Sentence upon them therefore is full of Mercy; it is kindly fuited to their finful State, and turneth to their great Comfort and Advantage: It is an Abridgment of Life, where Length of Days would only lengthen and increafe their Miferies; it is an Impofition of Labour, where Idlenefs muft be destructive of all Happinefs and Society. The Judgment upon them (provided they be truly penitent) relateth only to their Affliction, Discipline, and Diffolution here, in order to their joyful Refurrection, and Glory, and Blifs, and Immortality, hereafter. The free Grace and Mercy of God appeareth no lefs, if in the next Place,

2. We observe, *Secondly*, How we, and all their Posterity, from the first to the last, are affected, both by their Transgression, and the Pardon which so immediately was granted, and is for ever extended to all that do accept it, in every Age, and in every Nation, according to the Terms in which it is proposed, at several Times, and in divers Manners.

We indeed, their Progeny, not yet produced into Being, could not, strictly speaking, be said to have transgressed, when our first Parents broke the Commandment; but as *Adam* and *Eve* represented their whole Posterity, in them human Nature itself was tainted and corrupted: The Punishment of his Sin, like an Attainder of Blood, descended on his Children, and we are involved in the Sentence more worthily than the Children of legal Traitors, because we derive a real Depravity, and with that Depravity an actual Guilt, from our first Parents, which unavoidably discovereth itself in a thousand Forms of Sin and Transgression. Our Transgressions indeed are not one of them the same with theirs, but they are all derived from that one original Transgression, as an Effect from its Cause; and therefore as we are all tainted in our Nature, and have in us the Seeds and Principles of Sin, we do also fall under the Sentence of Death and Condemnation: And so, as the Apostle speaketh, *Death passed upon all Men, for that all have sinned.* And Death hath reigned from  
*Adam*

*Adam* until now, even over them that had not sinned after the Similitude of *Adam's* Transgression, who is the Figure of him that was to come, namely, of the promised Seed; that as by the Transgression of our first great Representative we were all lost and forfeited, by the Obedience of the second we might all be pardoned and restored. Herein then, according to the Apostle, shineth forth the free Grace and Mercy of God, in that the very first judicial Act contained a Promise of Pardon to the first Transgression, and all future Transgressions, upon the Terms of Faith and Repentance, to be accepted thro' the Seed of the Woman; and we, the Posterity of these first Parents, as we were included in the Covenant which they broke; are included also in the Covenant of Pardon, even before we were born: So just and so equal are the Ways of God, that if it seem hard to involve the Children in their Parent's Guilt, it is certainly most gracious and merciful to include them likewise in the Covenant of Grace and Pardon. The Promise is of an universal Nature to *Adam* and his Posterity; as we sinned in one universal Representative, we are pardoned in another; as by the Offence of one Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation, even so, by the Righteousness of one, the free Gift came upon all Men to Justification of Life.

3. *Thirdly*, The free Grace and Mercy of God appear not only in the original Promise of  
Pardon

## 140 S E R M O N VII.

Pardon to *Adam* and his Posterity, but more especially in the actual fulfilling this Promise, and conferring this Pardon upon us his Sons, notwithstanding our great and manifold Offences. Our Provocations are such, as might cancel and disannul the Promise. We have nothing in us to invite a Pardon, nor to deserve the least Grace or Favour at the Hands of God; yet still the Patience, and Forbearance, and Long-suffering of God, wait as in the Days of *Noah*, and the Goodness of God leadeth us to Repentance, that gives us the kindest Calls, and the greatest Encouragement to forsake our Sins, and accept of Pardon and Salvation.

The Pardon is indeed conditional; it requireth our Acceptance, upon the Terms in which it is proposed to any Person or People; how God will be pleased to deal with the several Nations of the Earth in the several Ages of the World, it importeth not us either curiously to enquire, or presumptuously to determine; it is our greatest Wisdom to look to ourselves, and reflect seriously upon our own Behaviour: For even now, when it hath pleased God to offer us his Grace in the clearest and most ample Manner, by the preaching of his everlasting Gospel, do we not either refuse to accept it, or by our continual Provocations do we not forfeit the Pardon, and render ourselves most justly obnoxious to his severest Judgments? There are in all Ages Millions who reject and despise his Mercies, who sin against the Light of Nature,



*The free Grace of God.* 141

Nature, and Light of Grace, and of both; and that any of the Sons of *Adam* are actually made Partakers of his Mercy, it is meerly of his great and infinite Goodness: We are like others in the common forfeited Condition of all Mankind, not only with Respect to the original Forfeiture in *Eden*, but more especially with Regard to our own personal Forfeiture of ourselves by our manifold Sins and Transgressions; but God hath called us, and we are his Elect in *Christ Jesus*: Where-ever the Gospel is preached, those only are rejected who do obstinately refuse the Call, and despise the Riches of his Grace. What *St. Peter* declared to the *Jews*, is equally applicable to all Mankind: *For the Promise is to you, and to your Children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call, Acts ii.*

39. That Grace surely must be free, where nothing but Provocations to God's Wrath and Vengeance are to be found; and the Goodness of God is most triumphant, where Grace aboundeth above Sin, and Mercy rejoiceth against Judgment: *For he hath not dealt with us after our Sins, nor rewarded us according to our Iniquities, Psal. ciii. 10.*

And lest we should vainly imagine that any Goodness or Merit in us might incline our heavenly Father to Pardon and Reconciliation, *St. Paul* expressly teacheth us, that *not by Works of Righteousness, which we have done, but according to his Mercy, he saved us by the Washing*  
of

## 142 S E R M O N VII.

*of Regeneration, and Renewing of the Holy Ghost, Tit. iii. 5.*

4. *Fourthly*, The free Grace and Mercy of God are further manifested in the Manner and Method taken for our Salvation, that is, for the Accomplishment of this Promise, and the rendering of it effectual to us.

That God should not only pardon and deliver us by the Seed of the Woman, but that the Seed of the Woman should be also the eternal Son of God, who in the Fulness of Time was sent, and came and took our Nature upon him; that the eternal Son of God in our Nature should suffer, and die, and become obedient to Death, even the Death of the Cross; this, towards us, must be an Act of free Grace and Mercy: For howsoever Justice claimed Satisfaction for our Sins, and, if they were to be atoned for, required such an Atonement, and no less, that is, no other would suffice; it is an Act not of the less, but of the greater Grace in God, to appoint, and in our blessed Lord to undertake this Redemption for the Sins of the World: And the Freeness of God's Grace, and the exceeding Greatness of the divine Love and Mercy, are the more conspicuous still, in the extreme Pain and Suffering to be endured for the finishing and compleating this great Work, and Labour of Love.

From our Redemption itself, and all that our Redeemer underwent and suffered for our Sakes, we must look further still to the Method

taken, and the Means prescribed to render our Redemption effectual to us, that it may not be in vain to those who are willing to embrace it.

In order to this, it hath pleased God to consider the great Alteration made in the very Frame and Temper of our Minds by the Sin of our first Parents; to look upon the Weakness and Frailty of our Nature; our strong Propensions to Evil, and faint Inclinations to Good, especially when the one are drove on, and the other opposed by any of our inordinate Lusts and Passions: As therefore, by the original Depravity of our Nature, we are thus subject to Sin, and have, consequently, *the Sentence of Death in ourselves*, 2 Cor. i. 9. that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God, which raiseth the Dead, who hath delivered us, and doth, and will deliver us from so great a Death; God hath given us not only his Son, that promised Seed of the Woman, but with him his holy Spirit also, to be in us a new Principle of Life and Holiness; to strengthen us against Temptations, to incline and assist us in our Duty, to support us under all our Trials, and to comfort us under all our Afflictions: And besides the Grace itself, he hath also given us all those Means of Grace which are requisite to the Discharge of our Duty, especially his holy Word and Sacraments. Thus in Baptism *we wash away our Sins*, Acts xxii. 16. and in the other, *the Blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all Sin*, 1 John i. 7. and for  
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144 S E R M O N VII.

his holy Word, we are not only taught in general that the Words of the Lord are pure Words, converting the Soul; but our blessed Lord doth moreover, in a special Manner, assure his Disciples, *Now ye are clean through the Word, which I have spoken unto you*, John xv. 3. These all are Means selected by God, and by him given and appointed unto us, that we may be filled with his Grace.

The whole Dispensation and Method of our Redemption is of the sole ordering and Institution of God our Saviour, and among other Purposes also he hath given us his Spirit, *that we might know the Things that are freely given to us of God*, 1 Cor. ii. 12. With Respect to the Greatness of his Mercy, we may contemplate the Love of Christ, *which passeth Knowledge*, Eph. iii. 19. and cry out, with the Apostle, *O the Depth of the Riches both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God*, Rom. xi. 33. With Regard to the free Grace of God in this Promise of Pardon and Deliverance, *Christ* did not only *die for the Ungodly*, but in this more especially *God commendeth his Love towards us, that while we were yet Sinners, Christ died for us*, Rom. v. 6, 8. And thus hath God shewed the exceeding Riches of his Grace, in his Kindness towards us, through Christ Jesus. *For by Grace ye are saved through Faith, and that not of yourselves: It is the Gift of God*, Eph. ii. 7, 8. With Reference to the Certainty, as well as to the Greatness and Freeness of this Grace,

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we may look upon it as an Earnest and Assurance that nothing will be wanting on God's Part to secure to us these great and precious Promises. For now we may conclude, with the Apostle, *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all Things?* Rom. viii. 32.

These Things laid all together, furnish a full Plea and Vindication of the divine Goodness, with Reference to the sinful State of Mankind, and the Miseries that attend it. For first, God created Man upright, and so there was no Fault in the original Constitution of Things; but then, as Man was made a free Agent, of a mixed and compound Nature, consisting of Spirit, and Soul, and Body, inspired with a divine Principle of Reason and Understanding, endued with various Passions, and a sensual or carnal Appetite (all which are to be held in a due Subordination and Subjection to the supreme Authority and Command of Reason); it was very fitting and just for God to assign unto Man some special Point or Instance of Duty wherein he might exercise the Dominion of Reason over the Passions and Appetites of his Soul and Body, under the severest Penalties, if he transgressed and inverted the Order God had established in the Nature and Constitution of Man. This was the Case in the Commandment given, and Man's transgressing in that Trial of his Obedience:

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## 146 S E R M O N VII.

dience : God made him free, like the Angels, but like the Angels also ; because finite, not impeccable. If Men or Angels sin, who is chargeable with the Consequences ? Will it be said, that it is inconsistent with the divine Goodness to create a moral Agent ? Or what is the same Thing a Creature capable of sinning, as well as capable of not sinning, in any Instance given ? Or will it be said, that it is unjust in God to punish moral Agents for their Sins ? This will hardly be pretended ; but if, as our Infidels do all of them insinuate, and some of them openly avow, that it is unjust, and a Fault in the original Constitution of Things, for God to have created Man not with sufficient Powers and Abilities to know and to perform his Duty ; nay, that it is an Imputation on the divine Justice, to suppose Man, in his present Condition, not to be able, by the Strength of his own Reason, to pursue and attain his own Happiness, so sufficient to be without Excuse if he faileth ; what must we think, if God had indeed created Man such as in his present State we find him, a depraved and sinful Creature ? Their Schemes are contradictory, and inconsistent with themselves ; and while they plead for the Sufficiency, they charge upon God all the Weakness and Defects of our Nature. But be it, as we say, that God created Man in original Uprightness and Rectitude of Nature, and Man by his own Default fell from the Uprightness in which  
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he was created, surely the Justice of God is absolved; and as it is 'no Injustice in the Almighty to produce a Creature into Being capable of sinning, it is no Injustice in him to punish such Creatures for their Sins. On the other Hand, be it, as our Infidels suppose, that Man came out of the Hands of his Creator in the present State and Condition in which we find him; a Way is opened to all the blasphemous Consequences with which these Blasphemers charge their Creator. And yet tho' it is evident that Man is born, or at least groweth up in a State of Imperfection and Sin, these Men pretend that our present is a State of such Perfection, as to render Man inexcusable for his Sins. Thus while they blaspheme their Maker on one Side, they justify him on the other; and it is just and righteous in God to condemn those who are confessed to be inexcusable: And were this indeed the wretched Case of Man, and should God leave him entirely without any Remedy to the Law, still the Proceeding would be just, and his Maker be justified. *Yea, let God be true, and every Man a Liar, that thou, O Lord, mightst be justified in thy Saying, and mightst overcome, when thou art judged; that every Mouth may be stopped, and all the World may become guilty before God,* Rom. iii. 4, 19. For howsoever Man became a Transgressor, we find, by the holy Scriptures, that God hath had Mercy upon him, and his Goodness is fully vindicated in

## 148 S E R M O N VII.

proposing to him a Promise, and a Covenant of Pardon and Reconciliation. Whether Man will accept of this Pardon, or whether he will resist and refuse the divine Grace and Mercy, this is still an Effect of his free Will, and of his Depravity; but God is justified in all his Ways, whether his Grace be refused by those to whom it is offered, or whether it is not offered to those who will most certainly refuse it. It was offered and made known to all Men in the Days of *Adam*, and in the Days of *Noah*; and those who disregarded it then, and those who rejected the fullest Evidence, even the Seed of the Woman himself, when he came; and those who do now reject both the Offers and Evidence of the Gospel, these and such as these, in all Ages and Nations, have rejected, and will reject any Evidence that is fit to be offered to a reasonable Creature. They take upon themselves to know and to decide what God ought and ought not to have done; *But thou, O Lord, wilt be justified in thy Saying, and clear, when thou art judged.*

I come now, in the third and last Place, to lay before you,

III. The due Use and Improvement we are to make of the several Passages already discoursed upon, according to the great Goodness and Grace of God therein promised and reached out unto us.

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I have already subjoined a particular Application to every Discourse, and therefore now a more general one will serve, with Regard to the main Doctrine delivered in them. And

1. *First*, We must be deeply sensible of the Misery of our sinful State, and of our own Weakness and Inability to deliver or relieve ourselves, that so we may have true, that is, humble Thoughts of ourselves, and look up unto God alone, from whom cometh our Help.

We are descended, as we have seen, from a depraved and sinful Original, and are by Nature the Children of Wrath, as Sin in its very Seeds and Principles must ever be displeasing and hateful unto God. Of ourselves, unless the Grace of God interposeth, and sheddeth abroad his Love and Fear in our Hearts, we are not able to do any Thing to please him. We are so far from being able to do, that *we are not able to think any Thing as of ourselves, but our Sufficiency is of God.* This St. Paul speaketh indeed with Regard to his Ministry, but it is true also in all the Actions of our Lives. Were we to follow Nature alone, we should find, that every Imagination of the Thoughts of our Hearts is only evil continually. This is the miserable Estate into which we are fallen, and the first Step to our Desires of Pardon and Reconciliation, is to be deeply sensible of it; we must be cured of all proud Thoughts, and high Conceits of ourselves, of our own Excellency and Sufficiency, and rely and throw our-

## 150 S E R M O N VII.

selves entirely upon the Goodness and the Grace of God: If we, like the Heathen, to whom *St. Paul* and the rest of the Apostles preached, were now first to be called to the Gospel, and, like them, did accept the Call; like them we should be also truly sensible of our own Misery, and of God's infinite Mercy. By Nature our Case is the same, and we are to receive and embrace the Salvation in which we stand with all Humility, and Thankfulness, and Love, to our blessed Saviour, our most merciful and almighty Redeemer. As the Sense of our Sin and Misery should teach us Humility, our Deliverance from them should, in the second Place, teach us,

2. To be ever thankful for it.

To receive a Pardon from earthly Princes, especially where we have no Claim to deserve it, and the Grant is wholly owing to their Favour and Goodness; this would surely engage our perpetual Thankfulness and Gratitude: But not only to be pardoned, but, while we were yet Rebels, to be pardoned, and received to Grace, and advanced to the highest Degrees of Happiness and Glory; these are such Heightenings of Love, such Miracles of Goodness, as quite amaze and confound us. The Mercies of Man, nor his Notions, nor his Measures of Mercy, can reach to this great and sublime Perfection: Man is too impotent, when often provoked, and greatly offended, not to punish and revenge; the Reason of Man  
can



*The free Grace of God.* 151

can find no Object of Love in an Enemy, and the Wisdom of Man thinketh it Weakness to forgive: But the divine Compassions do never fail, and the divine Mercies are full of Wonders and Astonishment; for God is a righteous Judge, strong and patient, and God is provoked every Day: And in this God and our Saviour commendeth his Love towards us, that while we were yet Sinners *Christ* died for us; he died to save us from our Sins, and to bring us to Glory: And therefore *all Honour, Praise, and Thanksgiving, be unto him that sitteth on the Throne, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever.* Amen.

3. To our Thankfulness, as the best Expression of it, let us constantly join our Obedience: The End of our Saviour's Coming is indeed to redeem and to save us, but then it is to redeem us from all Iniquity, as well as from Death; to redeem us from Sin unto Holiness, in order to our Happiness. To restore us to God's Favour, he first restoreth us to ourselves; he gave himself, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar People zealous of good Works: This Seed of the Woman doth not only bruise the Head of the Serpent, but he doth also expel the Poison infused into our Hearts: That Poison, the Leaven of Malice and Wickedness, which worketh and fermenteth in our Souls, must be purged out, and we must become new Creatures, like little Children, or new-born Babes,

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desiring

## 152 S E R M O N VII.

desiring the sincere Milk of the Word, and the unleavened Bread of Sincerity and Truth, that we may grow thereby.

Our blessed Lord hath given himself for us, but it is under certain Terms and Conditions that he hath obtained eternal Redemption to us: The Terms we must accept, and the Conditions on our Parts we must perform, according to the Law and Dispensation whereby we are called. Among these are to be reckoned those Means of Grace which I have just recounted, namely, his holy Word and Sacraments, ever attended with all Instances of Faith and Obedience.

Without the Use of these Means, it is impossible for us to do any true and acceptable Service; his blessed Spirit accompanieth his own Institutions, and we must seek him, and can find him only in the Way of his Ordinances: We must accept Salvation upon God's Terms, and not upon our own Devices; if we reject them, when they are proposed, however others may find Mercy, to whom they were never offered, we shall certainly be rejected.

Our best Obedience is imperfect, and unless we are accepted in *Christ*, we shall be treated as Sinners. It is of God's free Grace that we are called to this State of Salvation, and we must give all Diligence to make our Calling and Election sure,

I

Which

*The free Grace of God.* 153

Which that we may all do, God of his infinite Mercy grant, even for the Sake, and thro' the Merits of *Jesus Christ* our most mighty Saviour, and most merciful Redeemer.

To whom with the Father and the Holy Spirit, be ascribed, as is most due, all Honour and Glory, and Worship and Blessing, all Might, Majesty, and Dominion, for ever and ever.  
*Amen.*



S E R M O N





## SERMON VIII.

On the Original Uprightness in  
which Man was created, and  
the Depravity of his Nature  
introduced by the Fall.



ECCLESIASTES vii. 29.

—*God hath made Man upright, but  
they have sought out many Inven-  
tions.*



N some former Discourses I have  
laid before you the Creation and  
the Fall of Man; but because se-  
veral useful Considerations may be  
added, and the several Duties rising from these  
Subjects may be further enforced, and illu-  
strated, I have chosen to bring them both into  
one View together, that by seeing how good  
and happy we were created, we may seriously  
and



## 156 S E R M O N VIII.

and sadly reflect upon the Sin and Misery into which we are fallen.

These Words do manifestly refer to the History of the Creation and the Fall, recorded in the three first Chapters of *Genesis*; and as Man was created in the Image of God, after the divine Likeness, a Fall most certainly it was, to depart from the Uprightness of his Creation, and sink so low beneath the original Perfection and Dignity of his Nature: But still a greater Fall it was from Life to Death, from the Favour to the Wrath of God. The first indeed did necessarily induce the second, and with his Innocence Man forfeited his Happiness.

It is a blasphemous Imputation upon Almighty God to contend, that Man was created in this Corruption and Depravity of Nature; nothing sinful and impure could be derived from the eternal Fountain of Purity and Holiness; Evil, natural and moral, must be referred to another Original: For when the Creator took a View of the Whole upon the Conclusion of his six Days Work, *God saw every Thing that he had made, and behold it was very good.* But this could not be true, if Man especially, the Crown and Perfection of his Works, were from his Creation so very evil. In this lower World Man is the only reasonable Creature, and when *God breathed into his Nostrils the Breath of Life*, and with that Breath endued him with all his intellectual Faculties,

culties, the Spirit so infused must certainly be pure, upright, and holy:

That Man continued not in the Uprightness of his Creation; that he defaced the Image, and lost the Likeness, after which he was created; this must be ascribed to some other Cause, and that, the Scriptures teach us, was Transgression. And that Men do ever since depart more and more from the divine Original, is to be ascribed to the same Cause of Sin and Transgression. As our Parents were, so are we. Our first Parents were created upright, and such, had they continued so, their Children had been born; but in them human Nature fell, and their Blood being tainted, their whole Posterity was necessarily attainted also. We are descended of sinful Parents, and what *David* confesseth of himself is equally true of all Mankind: *Behold I was shapen in Wickedness, and in Sin hath my Mother conceived me*, Psal. li. 5.

*God hath made Man upright, but they have sought out many Inventions.*

In discoursing upon these Words, I will consider, first,

I. The Uprightness in which Man was created: *God hath made Man upright.*

II. Man's falling from his Uprightness, and departing from the Rectitude in which he was created: *But they have sought out many Inventions.*

III. *Thirdly,*

## 158 S E R M O N VIII.

III. *Thirdly*, I shall conclude each Part with some proper Inferences, and a suitable Application.

I. I am to consider the Uprightness in which Man was created: *God hath made Man upright.*

To have a clear and distinct View of the Uprightness in which Man was created, we must look upon him, in the whole Frame and Constitution of his Nature, comprising both his Body and Soul, as we commonly understand them, and consider the several Properties and Dispositions of either, as they are mutually acted upon, and influenced by each other. But this may be too minute and particular. It shall therefore suffice to observe, that

Man, properly speaking, consists of three Parts; Spirit, and Soul, and Body: In the common Way of speaking we mention only the Body and the Soul, but then by the Soul we do more peculiarly understand the Spirit, or intellectual Faculties of Man, including therein the lower Faculties also of the Senses and Affections: For altho' the Spirit of a Man that is in him be of a Nature entirely different from the Body, yet being in this present State intimately united to it, and acting in Conjunction with it, so far as the Operations of the Mind depend upon those Organs of Sensation which are placed in the Body, the Spirit is to be considered not abstractedly by itself, but concurrently with the animal Functions, and in  
Con-

Conjunction with the Body in which it dwelleth. The Body, the meer carnal and grosser Part, we need consider no further than as it is animated by the Breath, and informed by the Senses, and directed, as the whole animal Frame ought to be, by the superior and sovereign Arbitration of the Spirit.

In the Constitution of Man we are therefore to distinguish the higher and the lower Faculties; the lower, as influenced by sensible Objects from without; the higher, as holding the Empire over all the lower Movements of the Soul, and as exercising itself in all the Acts of Reasoning and Contemplation far above the Power of a sensitive and meer animal Nature, such as Man's is, as to the bodily Part alone, actuated and enlivened with Breath and Blood, and Sense and Motion.

In taking a View therefore of the whole Man, we will survey him in the Order in which God created him, that so, by seeing him the more distinctly, we may the better discern the Uprightness in which he was created, and behold the original Perfection of his constituent Parts, his Spirit, and Soul, and Body.

1. The first created Part of Man was his Body: This is not mentioned distinctly in the first Chapter of *Genesis*, but it is in the second; in the first Chapter it is declared, that *Man was made in the Image, and after the Likeness of God*; in the second we are acquainted with the Order in which he was made; *And the*  
Lord

## 160 S E R M O N VIII.

*Lord God formed Man out of the Dust of the Ground, and breathed into his Nostrils the Breath of Life; and Man became a living Soul, Gen. ii. 7.*

For the Body therefore, in the first Place, we may truly say, that God created Man upright, according to the old traditionary Song; that when other Creatures, the Beasts especially, look down to the Earth, *God gave unto Man an erect Countenance, and commanded him to look up to Heaven.* By Uprightness, with Regard to the Body, is understood that Perfection which consisteth in a just Simmetry and Proportion, in Opposition to all Crookedness and Excrecence whatsoever; answerable to that perfect Archetype and Model in the divine Mind. So when it is said that *God formed Man out of the Dust*, the Word which we translate [*formed*] is the same which is used in the Potter's Work to express the moulding and fashioning the Clay into what Form he pleaseth, according to the Imagings of his own Fancy: The Word which we translate *the Dust of the Ground*, properly signifieth such Earth as Potters use to make their Vessels of, in any Kind or Figure; it is not dry Dust, but moist and supple Earth; and the Work is represented as if God with his own Hands had formed and moulded the Body of Man; so that Man truly *was*, as he is said to be, *like Clay in the Hands of the Potter.* See *Jer. xviii. 6. Job x. 8, 9. Isa. lxiv. 8.* But then, tho' in forming the  
Body,

Body, Allusion be made to the Potter's Hands, it was formed by the plastic Power of the Word alone; and tho' done in an Instant by the almighty Word, the greatest Mastery and Exactness appeared in the Work. *Adam*, the Son of Earth, was fashioned outwardly in the truest Lineaments and Proportions of Joint and Limb, and the justest Temperament and Disposition of Feature and Complexion, in perfect Strength and Beauty: Inwardly, that is, in the intestine Parts and Construction of the Body, how masterly and wonderful is the Frame! The Bones, that extend and support the Whole; the Chords and Sinews, those firm and curious Ligaments, that tie the Joints together; the Muscles distributed throughout the Flesh, that covereth us, to serve for all the various Movements of the Body, and the Head, which is placed above it; the Disposition and Situation of the Heart and Lungs, to preserve Life in a constant Tenor of Breath and Blood, together with the Place and Figure of the other Vessels, so admirably fitted to receive and perfect our Nourishment, to retain the necessary, and discharge the superfluous Parts of our Food: But, more than all, the most curious and exquisite Organs or Instruments of Sensation; their quick and instantaneous Communication with the Brain, that Seat and Throne of the Mind, before which the Senses present themselves, and make their Report to the Understanding; they, all these, were formed and

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## 162 S E R M O N VIII.

disposed in that absolute Perfection, that every one, with the Psalmist, may cry out, *I am fearfully and wonderfully made!* Psal. cxxxix. 14. Thus *Adam* and *Eve*, our first Parents, the Archtypes and Patterns of all their Posterity, were formed at once in their full Strength, Stature, and Perfection, without any Blemish, Deformity, or Defect; and he out of the Earth, and she out of him, appeared in perfect Beauty. That any of their Posterity are any ways deformed, is owing to that Distortion of Nature which was introduced by Sin, the Fountain of Disease and Mortality; and every Defect and Obliquity in the outward Form is more immediately derived from an irregular Imagination of the Parent's Mind, or a forced Contraction of the Children's Body: But God, even with Respect to the Body, created Man upright.

2. After the Body, we may take a Survey of the animal or natural Powers, which are lodged in the Body and the Soul, and are subject to the Spirit. For besides our Bodies, this we have in common with the Beasts that perish, an animal Life, which giveth Motion to the Body, and performeth all the Functions of Breathing, Nutriment, and Sensation: In this animal Frame are seated the Perception of Pleasure and Pain, of Hunger and Thirst, and Repletion; our Likings and our Loathings, our Complacencies and Aversions, our strong Antipathies and stronger Inclinations to outward Objects,

Objects, are placed in this lower Region, and more especially in those two Passions of our Nature, our Anger and Desire. The Soul of Man, thus considered, is acted upon by outward Objects, such as we perceive to be agreeable or disagreeable to the Senses: And as the Nerves and Brain, which are a Part of the Body, are Instruments also, by which the Impressions made upon the Senses are conveyed to the Mind; and since it is during this Life only, which consisteth in the Breath of our Nostrils, that this Correspondence of the Senses with the Spirit is maintained; therefore this natural Life, which we breathe, this animating Soul, the Seat of our Senses, may well be called the Term and Ligament between the Body and the Spirit of Man: By this the Communication between them is maintained, thro' this all outward Impressions pass from the Senses to the Mind, and by this the Mind acteth upon all outward Objects again.

This natural Life which we breathe, is subject, since the Entrance of Sin, to many Disorders and Imperfections; to outward Violence, and inward Obstructions, and a long Train of Sickneses and Pains. Our Senses are affected in proportionable Degrees, and grow languid and dull, according to the Ailments and Distempers of the Body. Where they are most perfect in the soundest and most healthful Constitution, they have not that Vigour, Strength, and Quickness, they had in our first

164 S E R M O N VIII.

Parents: In us they are very often impaired and disordered at our Birth, they certainly decay with our Age. The Ear is dull of hearing, and the Eye is dull of seeing; it looketh askance and awry, or seeth Things under a wrong Cast and Tincture. The Touch, the Taste, and the Smell, are in the Course of Years deadened and rebated. Some feel a Defect in one Sense, some in another; and tho' our Senses are our surest Directors, tho' they cannot be deceived according to the Quality and Degree of their Perceptions, yet if there be any Fault in them, they will deceive us, if we are not aware of the Defect. This Weakness and Decay of our Senses is the Consequence of our sinful Birth, not of our original Creation; it is included in the Sentence of Death, and is the sure Harbinger of Mortality; and the natural is inseparably joined with the moral Corruption. If ever then the Senses were in Perfection, if ever the animal Life performed its Functions in absolute Harmony, and a constant Tenor, it was at our first Creation, when God created Man upright; all since are the Generation of sinful Creatures, and the most beautiful of the Sons of Men can never equal the great Originals drawn, as it were, and formed by the Hand of God himself: The Stature and Proportion of their Bodies, the Beauty and Liveliness of their Features, the Lustre and Vigour of their Eyes,

over

over all which Innocence threw a bright and inexpressible Glory!

Thus arrayed they exceeded those beauteous Flowers the Lilies of the Field, which exceeded *Solomon* in all his Glory. The Entrails of the Silkworm, the Fleeces of the Flocks, the darkeſt Sables, or the whiteſt Furs; the richeſt Dies, and the moſt lively Colours, Scarlet and Blue, and Gold; the Robes of Kings, and Treasures of the Mines; Emeralds, Sapphires, and Diamonds; the Breastplate and Garments of *Aaron*, made for Beauty, and for Glory; all theſe were uſeleſs here: They are, at beſt, but the more ſplendid Coverings of Guilt, and worn in Innocence, would have ſerved only, like a Veil, to hide the Beauty of Holineſs, which reigned chiefly in their Countenance as on a Throne, and diffuſed its Rays over all their Perſon, majeſtic and compleat, in themſelves alone!

Such were our firſt Parents in their Bodies, and in their ſenſitive Faculties; that Life, which animateth the Body, and departeth with our Breath.

But then if we would behold the Height and Perfection of our Nature in all its Excellence and Glory, we muſt look, thirdly,

3. To the higher intellectual Faculties, to that Spirit which is in Man, when *God breathed into his Noſtrils the Breath of Life, and Man became a living Soul*; whereas, like other Animals, he was only alive before: For *the Spirit*

## 166 S E R M O N VIII.

*of God hath made us, and the Breath of the Almighty hath given us Life, Job xxxiii. 4. This is properly the Man; upon the Spirit thus breathed into him God hath impressed his own Image, and stamped his own Likeness: By this he teacheth us more than the Beasts of the Earth, and maketh us wiser than the Fowls of Heaven, Job xxxv. 11.*

We have seen the Perfection of the natural Life, in its Senses and Appetites, correspondent to the like in the Brute Creation; but in us, as Man is endued with an intellectual Spirit, and a reasonable Soul, these terminate not in our animal Nature, but are referred up to the Understanding, as to the supremest and last Resort of all our Affections: These Appetites, therefore, however raised by any of our Senses, are placed, by the great Law and Order of our Nature, under the Guidance and Direction of the Understanding; and all our Passions, Appetites, and Desires, must obey the Voice, and hear the Lore of Reason. The Weakness and Imperfections we do now experience in the higher and nobler Faculties of the Mind, are owing to the breaking of this Order, and the Subversion of this Law, thro' the Strength and Prevalence of the lower Affections, where we are subjected to the Power of Passion, and the Dominion of Sense. Here was the first Flaw and Breach in our Nature. The Impressions of Sense were strong; the forbidden Tree raised an Appetite and Desire in the first of Mankind; and



and that Appetite, so let loose, we have not been able to restrain ever since: Our sensual Desires have proved too mighty for our natural Powers, nor are we able to subdue them, but by the Weapons of our spiritual Warfare, and the supernatural Grace of the holy Spirit.

But in the Beginning it was not so; then the Spirit of Man was his great and ruling Principle, and Reason sat supreme like a Sovereign on her Throne; the Understanding was clear and strong, calm and serene, like the upper Regions of the Air; bright and smooth, as that *Sea of Glass like unto Crystal*, issuing from the Throne of God, *Rev. iv. 6.* in which, as in a Mirror, the Imagings of every Object, and the Distinction of every Thought, were fully represented in a just and adequate Resemblance. In this happy State, while the Understanding held the Reins, the Motions of the Will continued unbiaſſed and free, the Appetites were quiet and regular, and carried out only to the natural and innocent Desires of Thirst and Hunger, and to the moderate and simple Refreshments of Rest and Sleep: The external Pleasures of Sense, of the Eye especially, then rose from the Beauty and Variety of the new-made World; and Reason was entertained in Contemplation of the wonderful Fabrick, still looking up to the almighty Architect, to God, the Maker and Creator of all Things.

So many are our Imperfections, that we can hardly form any Notion of Perfection but by



## 168 S E R M O N VIII.

the Removal of our Defects. The truest Measure to know how perfect Man was made at the old Creation, is to consider how perfect he is required to be in the new; but with Regard to the natural Man alone, as we are far from absolute Perfection, he is most perfect who is chargeable with the least, and the fewest Failings; who keepeth his Senses and Desires in the greatest Subjection; whose Understanding is most calm and clear, neither clouded by Lusts, nor disturbed with Passion: And he is still most upright, who is most innocent.

At the first Creation all was regular and right, and before the Transgression God and Angels beheld a Pattern of human Perfection, such as it pleased God to exhibit in Man, the last Piece and finishing Stroke of the six Days Work!

After all his Searches into the Nature and Ways of Men, tho' he found many Instances of Vanity and Vexation of Spirit, *Solomon* could arrive only at these two universal Conclusions concerning the original and subsequent Condition of Mankind; *Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made Man upright; but they have sought out many Inventions.*

This brings me to the second Part of the Text, but that I must let alone at present, and conclude with this short Exhortation; That we set before us the original Perfection of our Nature, and its present sinful depraved Condition; that we may remember whence we are fallen, and repent; that we endeavour to be-  
come

come indeed new Creatures, as by Baptism we are made, and have covenanted to be. Our blessed Lord, the Author of eternal Life to all that believe, hath set us a Pattern, and given us an Example of Perfection: It is our Duty to follow his Steps, and imitate his Example, tho' we cannot reach the Excellency and Perfection of it; but while we are in the Way of Perfection, growing in Grace, and going on from one Degree to another, we shall be accepted of him, and received and admitted by him into his everlasting Kingdom, where all our Defects will be done away, and we shall be still improving, and going on, and rising to greater and higher Degrees of Perfection for ever. To which most blessed State God bring us all, for the Sake of *Christ Jesus* our Lord, our Saviour, and Redeemer. To whom with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, be ascribed all Honour, Power, Might, Majesty, and Dominion, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

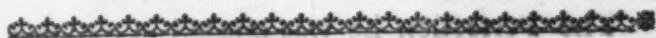






## S E R M O N IX.

On the Depravity of Men  
in their Inventions since the  
Fall.



ECCLES. vii, 29.

—*God hath made Man upright, but  
they have sought out many Inven-  
tions.*

E have taken a View of Man, as  
God made him, upright; erect in  
his Body, and regular in his Af-  
fections; unbiaſſed in his Will,  
clear in his Understanding: His whole Body,  
Soul, and Spirit, being faultleſs, without any  
Error or Defect; all perfect, and compleat, in  
the full Integrity of his Nature.

But now we muſt turn the Proſpect, and be-  
hold his Fall, which *Solomon* expreſſeth in the  
laſt Words; *But they have ſought out many*  
In-

## 172 S E R M O N IX.

*Inventions:* Hereby representing the Decline of Man from his Uprightness, and his departing from that Rectitude and Perfection in which he was created.

The Perfection in which Man was made (besides the Strength, and Beauty, and Compleatness of his whole Frame and Faculties), was a State of Innocence and Purity, *heightened and sanctified by the Infusion of all those divine Graces into his Mind, which were infused into him, when God breathed into his Nostrils the Breath of Life.*

The Perfection he was created in consisted chiefly in the Image and Likeness of God, and was still to be maintained and improved by a progressive Holiness in the Worship and Service of his Maker. It was a State of Innocence growing up to Glory, but it was not an irreversible absolute State, from which he could neither depart, nor fall. God's Goodness is fully justified in creating Man innocent, without any Spot or Blemish in his Nature, with sufficient Powers to persevere in Innocence, and to advance in Perfection: But then, as he was made a moral Agent, whose Actions proceeded upon Choice, and not upon Necessity, there must be in such a Frame and Constitution a Possibility of making a wrong Choice, and acting contrary to his Duty. There is none necessarily and unvariably good, but God alone; HE IS WHAT HE IS from the absolute essential Perfection of his Nature; all his Creatures,  
that

that is, all his intellectual Creatures, as Angels and Men, were created upright, but not indefectible; and the Event was in Part the same to both; they fell; Angels in their own Persons, and for themselves alone; they were created, the whole Number of them, at once, and there is not one more, or fewer, than were at first created, nor ever can be, without the Annihilation of some, or the Creation of others: For they do not propagate their Kind, and can neither diminish, nor increase their Numbers. But Man fell in his whole Nature, and derived the Consequences of his Fall to his Posterity for ever. Such as his Nature turned upon the Fall, such necessarily must the Nature of all his Descendants be. That Slavery to the sensual Appetite, that Propensity to Evil, that Backwardness to Good, that Predominancy of Passion, and Strength of Affection, are the genuine and unavoidable Effects of our first Parents Transgression; in them, as they were the Representatives of Mankind, we were created upright; in them also we fell, and do daily manifest our fallen Estate by our manifold Offences. *God hath made Man upright, but they have sought out many Inventions.*

Now whether or no we were affected by the Fall thro' the Imputation of Guilt, as we were included in the Covenant made with our first Parents, it is plain we are concluded by the Contamination of Nature discovered in the numberless Stains of our own actual Transgressions



## 174      S E R M O N IX.

gressions. Whether *Adam's* Sin itself be imputed to us, or no; that evil Concupiscence derived from it will ever be imputed, unless pardoned in *Christ*; this is truly the original Sin, wherein we are conceived and born: It is the Taint and Corruption of our Nature, which breaketh out into a thousand Shapes and Forms of Transgression in several Kinds and Degrees, all which *Solomon* here calleth by the Name of Inventions.

By Inventions he doth not intend, nor would I be understood to mean, Discoveries of Arts and Sciences useful or prejudicial to Mankind, as they are differently applied; not what hath been lately found, as the Magnet; or may hereafter be found out, as the Longitude. The first Inventors have been revered as Fathers, and Benefactors, and Gods; they were not only honoured, but deified, and adored; and this alone gave Rise to a long Train of Inventions thro' a long Series of Time: I do not intend therefore the glorious Inventors or Inventions relating to public Benefit, and universal Good; but by Inventions I would understand all Deviations from Truth, all the Mistakes and Abuses rising from the Weakness or Wickedness of Men; those vain Devices of Man's Heart, whereby, in Opposition to the Will of God, *he seeketh Death in the Error of his Life*, Wisd. i. 12.

These, how various and numerous soever, may be reduced under these two Divisions;

the Perverseness of our Reasonings, and the Perverseness of our Desires. But the Ground of our perverse Reasonings being laid in our perverse Desires, I shall therefore, in the first Place,

1. Consider these Inventions as they signify perverse Desires; and then I shall pass on, in the second Place,

2. To the Perverseness of our Reasonings; those Inventions we seek out to accomplish, or to justify our perverse Desires. First,

1. We will take a Survey of these Inventions as they signify perverse Desires.

Desire is born and implanted in us, only it hath taken a wrong Turn from Good to Evil; instead of desiring heavenly Things, our Minds are set upon earthly Enjoyments; and instead of spiritual, we are pursuing sensual Pleasures. The Desires themselves, every Passion and Affection of the Soul, as implanted in us by our great Creator, are very good: It is our placing them upon wrong and forbidden Objects, and indulging them in undue Measures, that is Evil. The several Passions and Affections inherent in our Nature serve to excellent Purposes, when rightly directed, and duly governed; even when we set our Affections on Things on the Earth, we may raise them, even by those Steps, to Heaven, and make our Concernments in this World conduce, with the greatest Pleasure and Satisfaction, to our Happiness in the next: For *whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we*  
do,

*do, we may, as we ought, do all to the Glory of God.* Our worldly Happiness, were there no other, will always consist in rational Pursuits and Enjoyments; and, duly regulated, they are not only coincident with, but even become a Part of our Duty: But every unlawful Purpose, and all Irregularity and Excess, even in Things lawful, at once pervert and vitiate our Desires; and when we give a Loose to our Affections, and the Reins to our Passions, we are violently hurried on to all the Outrage and Extravagance of Sin and Folly. In these is seen the Perverseness of our Desires, and these are the Inventions which, in this Regard, we have sought out: First, the various Forms of Lust and Intemperance, of Pride, Hatred, and Revenge; and secondly, the several Ways we contrive to gratify these sinful Passions, and inordinate Affections. These Passions, as they do thus break out in us, are foreign, and Strangers to the Purity and Rectitude of our Nature; and when we look upon the several Schemes, which are formed in the Pursuit and Attainment of our Desires, it may be most truly said, that we *have sought out many Inventions.* Every evil Purpose, and every Step taken to atchieve it, is an Invention of this Kind. So many are the Errors and Deviations from the plain Paths of Truth and Duty, into the Mazes and By-paths of Sin and Folly, that while Men are following their own Inventions, the Ways of God are forsaken, and unfrequented: Like  
 2 neglected

neglected Tracks in a Wilderness, they are almost grown up, and covered over; hard to be found, and difficult to be trod: But the Paths of Error, how various and intricate soever at the first they seemed, are now all run into one great beaten Road; so that we may well apply those Words of our blessed Saviour, towards the Conclusion of his divine Sermon on the Mount: *Wide is the Gate, and broad is the Way, that leadeth to Destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the Gate, and narrow is the Way, which leadeth unto Life, and few there be that find it.* Secondly,

2. By Inventions may be understood the perverse Reasonings of Men. This is the Word given in the *Greek Translation*, and the same is frequently used in the Writings of the New Testament.

From hence is derived every *Départure* from Truth, whether in Theory or Practice, tho' commonly, and for the most Part, the Practice is first corrupted, and the Theory invented, and adapted afterwards to support it, as perverse Reasonings are derived from Men of corrupt Minds, and these again from corrupt Desires. Both these together, perverse Reasonings, and perverse Desires, set forth the Fall of Man from his original Rectitude, with Respect not only to the lower Appetite, but also to the intellectual Powers; for to both was the Temptation applied, with equal Skill, and prevailed. It was suited to the Pride of Nature, and the

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Strength

## 178 S E R M O N IX.

Strength of Desire. In the one the Tempter prevailed by false Reasoning; in the other by shewing only the forbidden Fruit to the Senses. And this Device of false Reasoning upon sensual Objects hath been the Method, he hath taken to deceive us, and to make us deceive ourselves, ever since. *Eve saw the Tree, that it was good for Food, and pleasant to the Eyes; this was the Temptation to the sensual Appetite; and it was recommended as a Tree to be desired to make one wise; this was the Temptation to the reasoning Faculties, in stirring up the Pride and Vanity of the Mind. Being thus far prepared, she yielded the more easily to the Tempter's false Reasonings upon the Smalness and Uncertainty of the Danger, and the Greatness and Certainty of the Benefit. She reasoned upon the Case as the Serpent did, and took of the Fruit, and did eat, and gave also unto her Husband, and he did eat.*

The Case indeed is something different between the Man and the Woman. The Woman was deceived by the Serpent; the Man was prevailed upon by the Woman: He was not present when she yielded to the Temptation, but immediately, as soon as she met him, she made him Partaker with her both in the Fruit and the Sin. Whether she repeated the Tempter's Reasons, or whether, seeing her alive after the Transgression, he also reasoned, that they should not surely die, upon whatever Suggestion else he yielded, he seems to have complied out  
of



of Weakness and conjugal Affection; and so God himself reproves him for hearkening to the Voice of his Wife in the Thing, which was so solemnly forbidden. *Adam* therefore, whether enticed by the Fairness of his Wife, or of the Fruit, reasoned very weakly and wrong upon the Command of God. To make Exceptions, and to suppose Cases, where God hath not supposed them, is to act both foolishly and presumptuously; and when God hath said, *Ye shall not eat*, who is that Angel, whether of Light or Darkness, that shall preach another Gospel, and tell us that we may?

To this perverse Reasoning are owing the Inventions of Men ever since; from hence the Disputers of this World have run into every Sort of Error, into the most refined, as well as the grossest Idolatry; into Idol, and into Creature Worship, whether celestial or diabolical; from the Host of Heaven, to the Beasts of the Earth; from a Saint and Angel, to a Stock and a Stone. By these Reasonings they have debased the eternal Son to a Creature, and pretend to pay him a lower and subordinate Worship; and from hence are derived all false Doctrine, Heresy and Schism, that have infested the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own Blood. From hence also, and from Ignorance together, have rose the several World-makers and World-menders, whether by Chance, or Hypothesis; that is, whether the World made itself, or these Folk could tell



180 S E R M O N IX.

how it should be made. From hence also sprung all the Sects and Schools of the Philosophers, and all the extravagant Dreams with which they amused themselves and their Disciples. From these perverse Reasonings and Disputings is derived whatever is singular and fantastical, and upon these are founded Prophaneness and Immorality, Superstition and Infidelity. So truly is it asserted, and so experimentally speaketh *Solomon*, when he declareth, *Lo this only have I found, that God hath made Man upright, but they have sought out many Inventions.*

I come now, in the third Place,

III. To conclude with some proper Inferences, and a suitable Application.

I. We may look up to the high and holy Original from whence we sprung: As to our Bodies, formed indeed of the Dust, to teach us Humility, but our Spirits were breathed into our Nostrils by God himself, to shew us the great Worth and Dignity of our Nature: By this Infusion he stamped his Image, and impressed his Likeness upon Man in the Shades, as it were, and Colourings of the Divinity; and in this Image consists the Rectitude and Uprightness in which he was created: *God hath made Man upright, but they have sought out many Inventions:* They have declined from their Rectitude, and have removed their Integrity from them; they have defaced this Image,  
and

and confounded this Likeness, and have inscribed and blotted up and down their own foul Drawings and abnormous Inventions upon the great and regular Original: The divine Part is sunk, and crusted, and daubed over; the earthly Part now rises, and prevaieth above it, and stands forward and prominent to View. We are lost and swallowed up in Sin and Mortality, and we may truly say, that now the earthly Body presseth down the Soul; our Lusts and inordinate Affections, our sinful and foolish Inventions, darken and distract our Understanding. We are fallen indeed, but let us remember that God hath had Mercy on us, and reconciled us to himself in *Christ Jesus* our Lord; he hath given us a new Principle, to kindle, as it were, again the Breath of Life, which was almost extinguished in us, to set free and disengage that high intellectual Faculty from the vast Load of Lusts and Passions under which it was stifled and oppressed. He hath given us therefore a new Principle of Life, even his holy Spirit, to purify our Hearts by Faith, to make us new Creatures, and to revive the Image of God within us; teaching us, that *concerning our former Conversation, we put off the old Man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful Lusts, and be renewed in the Spirit of our Mind; and that we put on the new Man, which after God, that is, after his Image and Similitude, is created in Righteousness, and true Holiness,* Eph. iv. 22, 23, 24.

## 182 S E R M O N IX.

2. In order to this, we must throw away and forsake our own Inventions, our perverse Reasonings and perverse Desires, that we may be truly subject unto *Christ* our Lord.

As for our perverse Desires, we must utterly renounce them, even all the sinful Lusts of the Flesh: *Mortify therefore your Members which are upon the Earth*; those sensual Appetites, and inordinate Affections, which proceed from the earthy Part of our Nature, and are therefore called, more peculiarly, our Members, which are upon the Earth. And of these, so far as the Temptations of our old Adversary do also prevail, we may say of them, as *St. James* pronounces of the Wisdom which is not from above, namely, the false Reasonings and wicked Inventions of Men, *that they are earthy, sensual, devilish*; and the Consequence of following them is Death. *For to be carnally-minded is Death, but to be spiritually-minded is Life and Peace: And they that are Christ's have crucified the Flesh, with the Affections and Lusts*, Col. iii. 5. Rom. viii. 6. Gal. v. 24.

And for perverse Reasonings, the Inventions of a proud and conceited Brain, we must, as *St. Paul* commands *Timothy*, *avoid prophane and vain Babbings, and Oppositions of Science falsely so called; the perverse Disputings of Men vainly puffed up in their fleshly Mind*, 1 Tim. vi. 20. Col. ii. 18. We must learn a just Submission to the Word of God, *and receive it, in Purity, Charity, and Humility, not as the Word* of

of Men, but (as it is in Truth) the Word of God, 1 Theff. ii. 13. Wherefore laying apart all Filthiness, and Superfluity of Naughtiness; and laying aside also all Malice, and Guile, and Hypocrisies, desire the sincere Milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby, and receive with Meekness the engrafted Word, which is able to save your Souls, Jam. i. 21. 1 Pet. ii. 1, 2. Casting down all vain Reasonings, and proud Imaginations, and every high Thing that exalteth itself against the Knowledge of God, and bringing into Captivity every Thought to the Obedience of Christ, 2 Cor. x. 5.

3. We ought always to remember, that through the Fall of our first Parents we are by Nature the Children of Wrath; it is by *Jesus Christ* alone, and through Faith in his Blood, that we are made the Children of Grace: For not for any Works of Righteousness which we have done, but according to his Mercy, he saved us, by the Washing of Regeneration, and the Renewing of the Holy Ghost. We are so utterly lost and disabled by the Fall of the first Man, that we can be raised and restored only by the second Man, who is the Lord from Heaven. By him we are redeemed, and in him alone we are pardoned and accepted; and therefore, according to our baptismal Vow, let us for ever dedicate ourselves to the Love and Service of God, to the Obedience of *Christ*, and the Guidance of his holy Spirit. Remember, that we are not our own, but are

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bought

# 184    S E R M O N    I X.

*bought with a Price: Therefore let us glorify God in our Bodies, and in our Spirits, which are Gods, 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. ever putting up that earnest Supplication of the Apostle, I pray God that your Spirit, and Soul, and Body, may be preserved blameless, unto the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.*



S E R M O N



# SERMONS

ON THE

HISTORY

OF

*CAIN* and *ABEL*.





THE HISTORY OF

THE

REIGN OF

CHARLES THE FIRST

IN THE

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

BY

JOHN R. H. PHILLIPS

OF THE

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# S E R M O N I.

On the History of *Cain* and  
*Abel*; of the Institution of  
Sacrifices.



GEN. iv. 3, 4, 5.

*And in Process of Time it came to pass,  
that Cain brought of the Fruit of the  
Ground an Offering unto the Lord.*

*And Abel, he also brought of the First-  
lings of his Flock, and of the Fat  
thereof. And the Lord had Respect  
unto Abel, and to his Offering:*

*But unto Cain, and to his Offering, he  
had not Respect.*



HAVE in several Discourses laid  
before you the Creation and the  
Fall of Man, together with the  
Sentence pronounced, and the Pro-  
mise of Redemption made upon the Fall.

God did not cast away the Care of his  
Creatures, nor abandon them to Misery and  
Despair;

# 188 SERMON I.

Despair; but promised them Pardon, and invited them to Repentance, and pointed out to them a Redeemer to deliver them from their spiritual Enemies, and reconcile them unto God.

Accordingly, they comforted themselves in this gracious Promise, and worshipped the Lord their God, as himself directed, for the present Atonement of their Sins, and for the Signification or shewing forth of his Promise, till the Seed should come in the Flesh, to suffer, and to die; as now, by the same Command, we celebrate the Accomplishment of this Promise, and do shew forth the Lord's Death until his coming again to Judgment.

In this Chapter we have Instances of Worship, both according to natural, and to revealed or instituted Religion; in natural Religion consisting in the more simple Acts of Prayer and Praise; in instituted, of those Sacrifices which were appointed to make Atonement, in Virtue of the great Propitiation to be made in the Fulness of Time; without which the Serpent could not be overcome, and the Prayers of sinful Men would be unavailable, by Reason of their inward Corruption, and their manifold Transgressions.

Concerning Prayer, considered as one Branch of natural Religion, we have an Instance of it implied, tho' not expressed, in the first Verse. For when *Eve* conceived, and bare a Son, she called his Name *Cain*, and said, *I have gotten a Man*  
from

*The Original of Sacrifices.* 189

*from the Lord.* This Son was the Blessing and Gift of God; she had intreated for him, and had obtained him of the Lord: So much the Name she gave him, *Cain*, signifieth unto us.

The other Part, that belonging to instituted Religion, we meet with in the Sacrifices which *Cain* and *Abel* offered of the Fruits of the Ground, and of the Firstlings of the Flock: These were certainly prescribed and appointed by God himself. For tho' natural Religion, with Respect to divine Worship, might possibly take its Rise from the Light of Nature alone, which teacheth Men that God is to be worshipped with Prayer for what they want, and with Praise for what they have received; yet natural Light could never instruct them in any Offerings beyond the Devotion of the Heart, and the Fruit of the Lips. Reason will convince us that God is to be worshipped, and that, when he is offended, we ought, if we knew how, to appease him; but by the Light of Nature alone we cannot learn in what Manner to appease him, nor what Atonement to offer for our Transgression: This must be appointed by God, who is the Party offended. Man, upon his Transgression, had nothing but Vengeance and Punishment to expect; and had not the Sentence of Mercy intervened, the Punishment had presently taken Place: But when God was pleased to make him a Promise of Pardon in the Seed of the Woman, he gave him also this Assurance of it, by directing him in the mean  
I Time

## 190 S E R M O N I.

Time how to approach and propitiate his offended Majesty. The Language here used in this very short Account, was then very clearly and fully understood; and to us, at this great Distance, it is clearly explained by the universal Practice afterwards, and particularly by the Sacrifices of the *Jews*, and the general Atonement which God commanded to be made every Year for the Sins of all and every one of the whole Congregation. All Parts of positive or instituted Religion must be of divine Original, that is, appointed and required by God himself; and we may observe, that the Practice even of natural Religion itself has, upon some Occasions, been enjoined, and so in that Instance became a Part of instituted Religion also; as when God commanded *Abimelech*, and told him, that *Abraham* should pray for him, for he was a Prophet; and *Abraham* did accordingly pray for him, and God healed *Abimelech*, Gen. xx. 17. Prayer is a Part of natural Religion; the Injunction of it in this Manner brought it under the Consideration of a positive and instituted Duty. As to Sacrifices, it is not indeed in this Place said, that *Cain* and *Abel* offered them by God's Appointment; but *Moses*, in this History, taketh it for granted, as a Thing well known, and universally received over all the World, that Sacrifice was originally of divine Institution: It was, doubtless, enjoined to *Adam*, and begun by him upon the divine Command; but *Moses* doth not mention that

## *The Original of Sacrifices.* 191

Particular, as he passeth by several others; his Design being to shew Mankind the early and dismal Effects of the Fall, and therewith also to introduce the History of the holy Seed, from whence, as concerning the Flesh, *Christ* was to come: He relateth the Murder of *Abel* by *Cain* his Brother, and in the Relation he acquainteth us with the Occasion, and so mentioneth their several Offerings, and the different Acceptance they found.

As to the Institution of Sacrifices, we meet with several Instances of it afterwards, besides the first and general Appointment: For not to mention the Sacrifices of *Noah*, of *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, nor those commanded afterwards in a more peculiar Manner to the Children of *Israel*, it is most material, as it gives us a clearer View of the general Religion among those Worshippers of the true God, who were not of his peculiar People, to consider the Instances of sacrificing, which we find in the Book of *Job*; where, if we look into the first Chapter, we are told, that *Job* offered Burnt-sacrifices on the Behalf of his Sons, lest peradventure during the Time of their Feasting they had sinned against God: And from hence we may, without doubt, collect, that he offered up daily Sacrifices on the Behalf of himself and his Family. If we look into the last Chapter, we shall find, that God did sometimes require a special Atonement for some special Sins, even among those, who in all other Respects seemed to



## 192 S E R M O N I.

to live in the Religion of Nature alone. For as God referred *Abimelech* to *Abraham's* Prayers in these remarkable Words, *For he is a Prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live.* In like Manner he commanded *Eliphaz the Temanite*, and his two Friends, *Go to my Servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a Burnt-offering; and my Servant Job shall pray for you, for him I will accept.* Here both Sacrifice and Prayer, not their own, but by the Hands and the Mouth of *Job*, are required; *lest, saith the Lord, I deal with you after your Folly; for ye have not spoken of me the Thing that is right, like my Servant Job.* These are two pregnant Instances of the Conjunction of positive and natural Religion; and that in natural Religion a Man's own Prayers shall not avail him for Pardon, without the Prayers of a Prophet, or such as God shall appoint to pray for him.

Thus much I thought fit to observe to you concerning the original Appointment of Sacrifices. The Silence of *Moses* upon their Institution, and the great Brevity wherewith he mentions them in this first Instance, is a strong Argument for the divine Appointment of them: It was a Thing as universally known that they were commanded of God, as it was the universal Practice to offer them, in Obedience to that Command.

If we were to enquire more exactly into the original Institution of Sacrifice, we must refer it up as high as the great Atonement and Propitiation

tiation promised in the Woman's Seed: Of this Atonement Sacrifices were so many Types and Prefigurations, and from this Atonement they derived all their Virtue and Operation, as being the intermediate Institution of propitiating the divine Goodness, and obtaining Pardon for Transgression. This Account, not to have Recourse to any other Passages, may be gathered from the fortieth Psalm, as attested and explained in *Heb. x. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.* where we read, *In the Head, or in the Volume of the Book, it is written of me, that I should do thy Will, O God:* That is, that the promised Seed should offer himself a Sacrifice for the Sins of the whole World. By the Head and Volume of the Book is to be understood either this original Promise of the Woman's Seed, as it standeth in the Head and Volume of *Moses's* Writings; or else by the Head and Volume of the Book is to be understood the Book of God's Decrees, whereby our blessed Lord, the promised Seed, is the Lamb slain from or before the Foundation of the World; as before, in the second Psalm, *David* introduceth our blessed Lord speaking of his own Incarnation according to the eternal Decree of God. *I will preach the Law, I will declare the Decree: Thou art my Son, this Day have I begotten thee,* Ver. 7.

What I have now offered concerning the Original of Sacrifices, may serve for a proper Introduction to the Discourses I intend upon  
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## 194 S E R M O N I.

the several Offerings of *Cain* and *Abel*, and the different Effects and Consequences of them. I shall only observe further, for the present, (what I shall afterwards make appear) that these, tho' they be the first Instances recorded, yet are not indeed the first Sacrifices that were offered; nay, very probably, not the first that were offered by these two Brethren: For there is no doubt but *Adam* had offered Sacrifice long before they were born, and grown to Maturity; and we may presume that they had each of them offered Sacrifices before. Only these their Offerings are taken Notice of, by reason of the different Reception they found, and the terrible Consequences in the Murder of *Abel*, and the Banishment of *Cain*. There is this Argument further, that they had both of them offered, and had both of them been accepted before; forasmuch as God seems to appeal to *Cain's* Knowledge, and his former Experience, that he should be accepted, if he had offered as he ought to have done. *If thou dost well, shalt thou not be accepted, as hitherto thou hast been?* Besides, we may observe, that what our Translators have rendered *in Process of Time*, is to be understood or rendered, *in the End of Days*, either in the Time, or the End of Harvest, or at the Return of any shorter Period: For there were some stated Times, and Returns of Sacrifice, as those Words do plainly suppose; and therefore this was not the first, but some Return of the stated Times, either annual, monthly, or weekly.

These

*The Original of Sacrifices.* 195

These Observations may possibly, at first Sight, seem to be of no great Importance; yet as every Thing deserveth our Regard which any ways contributes to our better understanding of the holy Scriptures, these Passages may with the greater Reason challenge our Attention, as they do moreover furnish us with some peculiar Arguments for the Vindication of God's Justice and Goodness in his Dealings with the Sons of Men. These therefore I shall briefly offer.

We have seen already, in the History of the Creation and the Fall, that God created Man upright, and that they fell meerly thro' their own Default: That as free Agents they were capable of falling, and that as moral Agents they were liable to Punishment. The great Dispute with the Enemies of revealed Religion is, Whether, supposing Man fallen from his original Rectitude, he cannot of himself, by Repentance alone, be restored to the divine Favour? If he cannot, then here is a full Vindication of the divine Goodness in finding out and prescribing to Man the Way to Pardon and Reconciliation.

Not to enter into any Debate with the Enemies of Revelation, concerning the Truth and Authority of the *Mosaic* History, let us only take human Nature as we find it, and look upon Man to be, as these our Adversaries allow, accountable for his Actions, and liable to Punishment for his Transgressions: And then, in what a miserable Condition are we? Obnoxious to the Judgment, and, at the best, insecure of

the Mercy of God. For take Mankind, and fort them over from the Day, that God created Man upon the Earth, and see if there be any one to be found, who can say, *I have made my Heart clean; I am pure from my Sin.* If Sin then lieth at the Door, who shall remove it, or how shall it be taken away? Suppose Repentance for the Sins that are past, will that fill up the Breaches made in our Obedience by Transgression? But suppose this Repentance continually broken and interrupted by Transgression, how can it be available for Pardon? To suppose Man perfect, and that of himself he can become such as God willeth him, and he ought to be, is to suppose against Fact and Experience. What then is to be done? Is it righteous in God to leave Man thus in the Hands of his own Counsel, so weak, so sinful, so utterly unable to deliver himself from the Guilt and Penalty of the Law? Yes. God made Man from the Beginning upright, and left him in the Hand of his own Counsel, a free and moral-Agent: Man has declined from the original Rectitude and Perfection, in which he was created; but God hath reclaimed and left him in the Hands of his own Counsel still; but he hath moreover added his Commandments and Precepts. If thou wilt keep the Commandments, they will preserve thee, even to do the Works of an acceptable Faith for ever. He hath set before thee Fire and Water, reach out thine Hand to whether thou wilt:



*The Original of Sacrifices.* 197

Before Man is Life and Death, Good and Evil, and what he liketh shall be given unto him; for manifold is the Wisdom of God, and he is mighty in Power: He hath commanded no Man to do wickedly, neither hath given to any Man a License to sin. For he standeth not in Need of the Multitude of Unbelievers, neither doth he desire unprofitable Servants.

This is the true State, and the common Condition of Mankind; and yet, if this had been all, that God had done for us; had he only given us his Precepts, and set Life and Death before us; such is the present Weakness and Corruption of our Nature, such the Perverseness and Unhappiness of our Choice, we should seek Death in the Error of our Life.

But God hath been gracious, and merciful, and good; he not only pardoned our first Parents their original Sin, but hath also found a Way to pardon all the Transgressions of them and their Posterity for ever. He raised up a Saviour to be a Sacrifice and Propitiation for our Sins, and not for ours only, but for the Sins of the whole World. If we look into Revelation, the Justice, and Goodness, and Mercy of God are fully vindicated, and perfectly reconciled; if we hearken to the Enemies of revealed Religion, we are in an hopeless desperate Condition, and they have no Way to assure Man of Pardon and Salvation, but by prescribing unto God, and at the same Time blaspheming their Maker.



## 198 S E R M O N I.

Upon the Scripture History alone are we able to vindicate the divine Justice and Goodness in the Creation and Fall of Man: There alone we have the true Account of the Origin of Evil, and of the Entrance of Sin and Death into the World: The Scriptures alone point out to us the Means of our Deliverance from Sin and Death, and moreover of our Restitution to Life and Happiness. We will not dispute with the Enemies of our Faith, what God was obliged to do; for surely his Grace and Goodness in the Pardon of Sin must be altogether voluntary and free: But whatever they pretend to pronounce he ought to do, we say he hath been graciously pleased to do, that is, to restore Mankind to his Favour upon such Terms, as it hath pleased him to propound in his holy Word: And till these Unbelievers shall be able to prove that God was, in their saucy Language, obliged to receive Men to Favour simply, without any Terms at all, but that of a very imperfect Repentance continually stained and violated with new Transgressions; we will, with all Joy and Thankfulness, accept and embrace the gracious Offers of Mercy and Salvation made us in the Gospel.

But now God hath not only had Mercy upon us, to pardon our Sins, but hath also reached out his Hand to help our Infirmities, to renew our Nature, and to accept our imperfect and defective Obedience, for the Sake of him who is our Saviour and Redeemer, our Propitiation,  
our

## *The Original of Sacrifices.* 199

our Mediator and Advocate, that Seed of the Woman who hath bruised the Serpent's Head.

To keep up, and teach, and propagate, and spread the Knowledge of this great Mercy; to plant and cherish in the Hearts of Men this blessed and lively Hope of Pardon and Salvation thro' the promised Seed, the Lamb then already slain in God's immutable Decree from the Foundation of the World, and now long since really slain, and offered up a Sacrifice as a Lamb without Blemish, and without Spot, in the Fulness of Time; it pleased God to institute various Sacrifices as Types of that great Sacrifice, and as a Means of deriving that Propitiation from the Throne of Grace, by Virtue of which Man is restored to Favour, and reconciled unto God.

Such were the Sacrifices which *Adam* offered, such were these here offered by *Cain* and *Abel*: These Sacrifices were revived and continued after the Flood by *Noah* and his Sons; we may trace them down to the Times of *Moses* and *Job*: And tho' in many Parts of the World, especially after the Dispersion at *Babel*, they were miserably perverted, corrupted, and depraved, by Idolatry and Superstition; yet they served to keep up some Sense and Remembrance of God's Covenant with fallen Man, and thereby to preserve all the Hopes they had of Pardon and Reconciliation. The true Religion consisting in the Knowledge and Worship of God, was once more universal in the Days of *Noah*,

## 200      S E R M O N I.

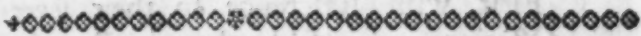
as it had been from the Creation till the Defection of *Cain*; the Corruption, and the Loss of it, was owing to the Sins and Wickedness of Men; and it is highly impious to charge God himself with Injustice, for not preserving this Religion universal, when the Loss or Depravation of it was wholly owing to the Perverseness, and Blindness, and Wilfulness of Man. But herein they charge God foolishly; they might as well arraign his Justice, and Goodness, and Mercy; that under the Gospel any shall thro' their Sins and Wickedness fall short of Salvation; that all Men believe not, to whom the Terms of the Gospel are offered; nay, that they themselves are Infidels under the Light and Evidence of the Gospel: But leaving them to their own All-sufficiency, to the dark, doubtful, joyless Prospect of their future State, concerning which they must be full of Fears, when they think of it, and can receive no Comfort from their Thoughts: Let us not, my beloved Brethren, forsake our own Mercies, nor neglect so great a Salvation as is offered and assured to us, thro' *Christ Jesus* our Lord; to whom with the Father, and Holy Spirit, be all Glory for ever. *Amen.*

S E R M O N



## S E R M O N II.

On the Sacrifices of *Cain* and  
*Abel*.



GEN. iv. 3, 4, 5.

*And in Process of Time it came to pass,  
that Cain brought of the Fruit of the  
Ground an Offering unto the Lord.*

*And Abel, he also brought of the First-  
lings of his Flock, and of the Fat  
thereof. And the Lord had Respect  
unto Abel, and to his Offering:*

*But unto Cain, and to his Offering, he  
had not Respect.*



HAVING already, by way of In-  
troduction, discoursed upon the Ori-  
ginal of Sacrifices, laying before you  
the gracious Purpose and Intend-  
ment of them, both as they were Types and  
Pre-

## 202 S E R M O N II.

Prefigurations of the promised Seed, who is the Propitiation for our Sins; and as they were the instituted Means of deriving down the Virtue and Benefits of that Propitiation from the promised Seed, the Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World: I proceed now to the Passage of the Text which containeth the several Offerings of *Cain* and *Abel*, and the different Acceptance they found.

I. First, with Reference to their several Offerings, it is said, that *in Process of Time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the Fruit of the Ground an Offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the Firstlings of his Flock, and of the Fat thereof.* These are their several Offerings. In the next Place we read,

II. *And the Lord had Respect unto Abel, and to his Offering: But unto Cain, and to his Offering, he had not Respect.* This is the different Acceptance which they found.

I. With Relation to their several Offerings, there are some special Points to be considered: As first, the Circumstances; next, the Offerings themselves.

i. For the Circumstances; *In Process of Time they brought each his Offering.* And here we must consider when, whither, or to what Place, and to whom they brought their Offerings.

i. First,

*The Offerings of Cain and Abel.* 203

1. *First*, For the Circumstance, when they brought them; *in Process of Time*. This, I have already observed, in the *Hebrew* is expressed *in the End of Days*; signifying a certain Revolution or Return of Time; as in the End of the Year, or in the End of Harvest: Not that there were not other stated Times for these Offerings; as in the End of the Week, according to the original Sanctification of the seventh Day: But these seem to be some peculiar annual Offerings, pointed out and specified by *the Fruit of the Ground*, and *the Firstlings of the Flock*: The Fruit of the Ground being offered, as is highly probable, upon the gathering in of the Corn; and the Firstlings of the Flock at the same Time, that the Meat-offering and the Offering of the Flock might be made together. But whatever particular Time is here intended, it is certain that the Words denote some set and stated Time in which these Sacrifices were offered; and so early we may be assured, as the Sanctification of the seventh Day were stated Times set apart and appointed for the Worship of God. It is not said, indeed, that God commanded *Adam* to keep holy the seventh Day; but no less can be understood by God's blessing and sanctifying it: It was for the Sake of Man, and for a Memorial of all the Works, which God had made, and from which he rested on the seventh Day. The Silence of *Moses*, upon this and other Occasions, is the strongest Argument of the Notoriety and universal Reception



## 204 S E R M O N II.

tion and Observation of the seventh Day, to sanctify and to keep it holy to the Lord, the great Creator and Possessor of Heaven and Earth. There is no other Reason, that the seventh Day should be universally held sacred in the ancient Times after the Flood, and that the Observation of it should be continued long after Men had lost the Knowledge of its Institution. But not to enter any further into so remote a Disquisition, let us enquire, secondly,

2. To what Place they brought their Offerings, for the Place is clearly implied; and whether they brought them, is a proper Question.

The Sacrifices, that were afterwards appointed, bearing a Resemblance unto these, we may safely interpret this shorter Relation by those larger Descriptions we meet with, especially in the Law of *Moses*; and more especially, where we find a Correspondence of the Terms. Now the Word here translated *brought*, according to the Observation of learned Men, who have studied the sacrificial Language with great Accuracy and Exactness, is a Word never used of private, but always of public Sacrifices; and signifieth especially the Place where the Sacrifices were offered; as in *Exod.* xxix, and xl. *Levit.* iv. 14. and many other Places, too numerous to be recited. I find, indeed, that it is the Opinion of some learned Men, supported by the Authority of several among the ancient Fathers, that *Cain* and *Abel* brought these Sacrifices, not by any Command of God, but as a natural

*The Offerings of Cain and Abel.* 205

natural Expression of their Thanks and Gratitude for the Blessings they had received. They might have added, that these Offerings were made in Acknowledgment of God's Sovereignty and Dominion, and of their Subjection and Dependence on him. For so far the Light of Nature will direct us, that it is very meet and right that we should in some Manner acknowledge the Sovereignty of God over us, apply to him for the Relief of our Necessities, and return unto him Praise and Thanksgiving for all the Benefits he hath done unto us: These are the Dictates of Reason. The Light of Nature will direct us so far in our Duty; but left to itself, the Light of Nature can teach us no other Worship than that of the Heart and the Lips, or such Postures of Reverence and Adoration, as the Awe and Splendor of the divine Presence might strike us into. It is hardly to be imagined that the Light of Nature should direct Men to sacrifice either the Fruits of the Ground, or the Firstlings of the Flock: Are we taught by the Light of Nature to think that God will eat the Flesh of Bulls, or drink the Blood of Goats? Did the Light of Nature teach them to offer the First-fruits of the Ground, or the Firstlings of the Flock? And could the Light of Nature assure them, that with such Sacrifices God would be well pleased? But if we resolve the Practice into the divine Command, all Difficulties vanish, and God may very well require, what Man would otherwise  
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## 206      S E R M O N II.

have never thought to offer. When God hath declared his Pleasure, the Light of Nature, Man's own Reason, presently tells him, It is fit that Man should obey his Creator in whatsoever he commandeth. Sacrifice is a Part of instituted positive Religion, in Contradistinction to natural; and if these Sacrifices had not been commanded and appointed by God himself, we cannot easily determine, wherein the Sin of *Cain* consisted: For had he brought his Offering out of a natural Sense of Gratitude and Duty, his Heart surely had gone along with his Hand; and as his Offering had been purely a Free-will Offering, there was no Consideration to tempt him to with-hold it, or to offer grudgingly; when, unless Sacrifice were a Duty of natural Religion, he had not sinned if he had not offered at all. But admit that these Sacrifices were prescribed and appointed by the divine Command, and we can presently discern how *Cain* might offend, both in the Matter and Manner of his Offering.

I shall conclude therefore, that these Sacrifices were appointed by God himself, and were to be offered in the Manner he had ordained; that the Place where they should be offered was appointed, as well as the Offerings themselves; and therefore, as God afterwards commanded the Children of *Israel* to bring their Sacrifices unto the Door of the Tabernacle, or before the Tabernacle; we may collect, especially since the Expression is the same, that from the  
Be-

## *The Offerings of Cain and Abel.* 207

Beginning Sacrifices were offered in some special Place; and particularly, that *Cain* and *Abel* brought their Sacrifices before the *Shechinah*, or *divine Glory*, which then appeared, as is most probable, at the East End of the Garden of *Eden*; or they were commanded to offer before the divine Presence, where-ever it appeared; as afterwards the Lord appeared unto *Abraham*, and there builded be an *Altar unto the Lord*, who appeared unto him, Gen. xii. 7. Thus he appeared also to *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, and *Moses*, till at last he fixed his Presence in the Tabernacle and the Temple; where-ever God appeared unto them, as unto *Moses* at the Bush, the Ground whereon they stood was holy Ground: And it is, I may presume, with Regard to this divine Appearance, and to the holy Offices performed before the divine Glory, that *Cain*, upon receiving his Sentence, crieth out, *From thy Face shall I be hid*. And accordingly we read, that *Cain went out from the Presence of the Lord*.

3. The next Enquiry is, to whom they brought their Offerings? And if we interpret this also, as we did the *Place* by the sacrificial Language used afterwards in the Law of *Moses*, we shall have Reason to conclude, that they brought their Offerings to the Priest, even unto *Adam* their Father, who ministered before the divine Presence. As they must necessarily bring their Offerings to some Place, by the Correspondence and Propriety of the Terms, they must bring them to some Person also: It is not

to be thought, that even then every Man was a Priest; (tho' it is pretended now, that every Man is, and ought to be a Priest to himself) but from the Beginning it was not so. This Office, we know, was appropriated to the Head of every Family, so high, as we can have any Light from History. To *Adam* therefore, the great Father and Patriarch of Mankind, they brought their Offerings; and, as *Melchisedec* is called afterwards, *Adam*, without all doubt, was the Priest of the most High God.

It is objected indeed by some, of great Learning, and particularly by one, who is the most distinguished of all the Writers upon this Subject; that *Cain* and *Abel* offered these Sacrifices each for himself; that no Priesthood was as yet instituted, and that those, who hold they brought their Sacrifices to *Adam*, have nothing to say for their Opinion.

I have observed before, that the Silence of *Moses* is so far from being an Argument against any Thing, which he doth not expressly mention, that it is a strong and presumptive Argument, that Things were at the Beginning, as they were found in his Time; and writing with so much Brevity, comprehending the Transactions of so many Ages in so few Lines, he passes over many Particulars, as then well known, and preserved by traditionary Practice in the World.

And therefore the Practice and Usage of the World in these sacred Rites, are the best and the surest Guides to the original Administration.

*Moses*



*The Offerings of Cain and Abel.* 209

*Moses* takes no Notice of any Institution, either of Sacrifices or Priests, till he comes to deliver the Law; but in the Course of his History before, he speaketh of both: We are plainly told, that there were both Sacrifices and Priests, tho' he gives no Account of their Institution. And in his Time we find, that the Priesthood was an appropriated Office, and continued so in many Nations, and for many Ages after. The Father, or Chief of the Family, performed the Priest's Office in those Days; and from those Days we may best conclude how it was in the Beginning. It is a true Observation, that Custom continues long after the Original of it is forgotten. If Sacrifices were at all commanded, the Injunction must have been given to *Adam*, and with the Injunction the Care of them committed to him also. I will make no Question but *Noah* was fully acquainted with all the religious Rites observed by his great Ancestor *Adam*: *Noah* was a Priest, as well as a Preacher of Righteousness; he offered Sacrifices, as well as prophesied: By him was transmitted the original or primitive Practice; what that was, is not to be determined by the Silence of a short History, which mentions several Passages incidentally only; but it is to be collected from the common Usage and Customs of the World, especially when the general Prevalence of those Customs among distant Nations, for many Ages after they had been separated, cannot be accounted for any other Way, than by



referring up to some common Head, and deriving them, as they do themselves, from the same Original.

Thus we have Time and Place, the Offerings and the Priest, that so we may derive the publick Worship of God even from the Beginning of the World; and if nothing else, we may well suppose divine Worship to be of divine Appointment. Reason, the Light of Nature, will, as we said, dictate to us that God is to be worshipped; but that God is to be worshipped in such or such a Manner, we must learn from some other Direction: The Offerings, the Time, the Place, and the Priests, cannot be the Dictates of meer natural Reason. We conclude therefore, that all these are of the Institution and Appointment of God himself, and, consequently, that publick Worship is so too.

From the Circumstances, I pass now,

2. To the Offerings themselves, which were made of *the Fruit of the Ground, and of the Firstlings of the Flock.*

*Cain brought of the Fruit of the Ground an Offering unto the Lord: And Abel, he brought of the Firstlings of the Flock, and of the Fat thereof; each according to his Occupation: For Abel was a Keeper of Sheep, but Cain was a Tiller of the Ground.*

These Offerings, I have said, were of divine Appointment, both as Memorials of the Promise and Pledges of its Performance, and at the

*The Offerings of Cain and Abel.* 211

same Time a Sacrifice of Thanksgiving, and a Means of atoning and expiating for Sin, in Virtue of that great Sacrifice of the Woman's Seed which should be once offered in the Fulness of Time. This is a strong and convincing Reason for the divine Institution, to open the Communication which was broken off by Transgression, between God and Man; and to afford him these visible Tokens and Pledges of Pardon and Acceptance.

We meet, as yet, with no Drink-offerings; for the Use of any Drink, but Water, was not known till after the Flood: The first Instance of such an Offering we find in *Gen. xxxv. 14.* *Jacob set up a Pillar in the Place where God talked with him, even a Pillar of Stone in Bethel: And he poured a Drink-offering thereon, and he poured Oil thereon.* This Drink, we learn afterwards, was to be of Wine in different Measures, according to the Sacrifice which it accompanied; and we may suppose, that since the same Term is used, *Jacob's* Drink-offering was of Wine; and all those that were offered before the Law, were of Wine also. This, however, is not material, and may seem to be besides the present Point; only thus much I would observe, that as *Moses* takes no Notice when these Drink-offerings were first appointed; we may presume, that they were made as soon as Wine became of Use, which was, we read, presently after the Flood; and *Noah*, who first planted a Vineyard, was the first, we may pre-

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sume,

## 212 S E R M O N II.

sume, who offered a Drink-offering to the Lord: And in the Way that *Moses* mentioneth it, it seemeth to have been an accustomed Service, and not then first taken up and begun by *Jacob*.

Before the Flood we read only of these two Offerings by *Cain* and *Abel*, of *the Fruit of the Ground*, and *the Firslings of the Flock*; though, without doubt, many Offerings had been made before by *Adam*, and innumerable afterwards by his Posterity, to the Flood. For whatsoever is the Meaning of those Words in the End of this Chapter, *Then Men began to call upon the Name of the Lord*, whether they be intended to denote that Men began then to join in more numerous Assemblies for the Worship of God, several Families, which had formed, as it were, so many distinct Congregations, now uniting in one; or whether then Men first began to distinguish themselves as the Servants of the true God, in Contradistinction to *Cain* and his Posterity; or whether *Moses* intended to set forth the Apostacy of *Cain* and his Children, as if Men, that is, his Sons, began then to prophane, as the Word *Hochal* sometimes signifieth *the Name of the Lord*, whatever be the Meaning of the Words; it is plain, as Sacrifices began long before, even from the Fall, they were continued, at least by the holy Seed, particularly in the Family of *Noah*, unto the Flood.

But how soon soever these Offerings began, how often soever they were repeated, and how  
long

*The Offerings of Cain and Abel.* 213

long soever they continued; this is certain, we read of no other Kind of Offerings than these. But then it is worthy our Observation, in these are founded and included all the Meat and the Burnt-offerings that were afterwards made unto the Lord, either under the patriarchal Religion, or the Law of *Moses*, which left the rest of the World at large to do as they pleased, and obliged the *Jews* only, and such as should be fully profelyted to them, to the Observation of it.

The *Fruit of the Ground* is here to be understood of Bread, the Chief of all the rest, the Staff and Support of Life, what, perhaps, *Cain* had only sown; and there seemeth Occasion, in that Infancy of the World, for no other Grain, tho' Barley also was used afterwards by the *Jews*. Bread Corn therefore we may suppose to have been brought by *Cain*, either in the Sheaf, or in the Loaf, as the Children of *Israel* were commanded afterwards to bring a Wave-offering in the Sheaf, when they first began to put the Sickle to the Corn, and another Wave-offering in the Loaves, when they had gathered in their Harvest. In what Manner *Cain* brought his Offering, whether in the Sheaf, or in the Loaf, it is not material to enquire: *Cain brought of the Fruit of the Ground an Offering unto the Lord*, this was *Cain's* Offering.

*Abel was a Keeper of Sheep, and he also brought of the Firstlings of the Flock, and of the Fat thereof.* There is no Difficulty to under-

## 214 S E R M O N II.

stand what his Offering was, only *the Firstlings* might be of the Sheep, or of the Goats; and as *he brought of the Firstlings*, his Offering might consist of both. The Firstlings of every Thing that is born, both of Man, and of Beast, is the Lord's, and so, doubtless, he claimed them, *Exod. xiii. 2.* For tho' there is a particular Reason given, *Ver. 14, 15.* why they were required of the Children of *Israel*; it is plain, from this Offering of *Abel*, that *the Firstlings of the Flock* were one of the appointed Sacrifices from the Beginning. Thus before the Law, when he claimeth *Israel* to be his People, he commanded *Moses* to say unto *Pharaoh*, *Thus saith the Lord, Israel is my Son, even my Firstborn, Exod. iv. 22.* For Man, as he afterwards appointed to the Children of *Israel*, we may reasonably presume, he ordered and accepted a Ransom for him: *The Firstlings of the Flock*, it is plain, however, he required; and in some Cases, under the Law, they could not be redeemed: Before the Law they were not all to be sacrificed, but when they would sacrifice of the Flock, or of the Herd, one of the Firstborn was to be offered. And this singling out the Firstborn from the rest sheweth still more evidently, that these Sacrifices were of divine Institution.

Before I proceed to the next Point concerning the different Acceptance they found, I must offer a Word or two relating to what I have now delivered. And therefore,

I. Those

*The Offerings of Cain and Abel.* 215

1. Those who are for disputing this Point concerning the Original of Sacrifices, may take their Choice of the two Opinions; if Sacrifices took their Rise from the Light of Nature, and the Reason of Mankind, then they are a Part of natural Religion, and must consequently, in some Form or other, be still in Force; if they were of divine Institution, the Institution is of divine Obligation: The Truth is, as they are Expressions of Gratitude, Thankfulness, and Devotion, they are founded in the Reason and Nature of Things. As they are a particular Form, or Way, or Manner of expressing these Duties, they are of positive Institution, but not of human; for the Light of Nature could not direct this Manner: They are therefore of divine Appointment. So is publick Worship founded upon the Principles of natural Religion; it is practised upon the Authority of divine Direction.

2. It is no less our Duty to conform to the divine Commands, that is, to offer up our Prayers and Praises in such Form and Manner as our blessed Lord hath appointed; we have offered up ourselves unto him in Baptism, and we continue to offer up ourselves, our Souls, and Bodies, in the holy Sacrament of his Supper; this is our Christian Sacrifice, succeeding into the Place of all the Sacrifices of the Patriarchs and the Law. He alone could abrogate the old, who first appointed them; and he alone could



## 216 S E R M O N II.

command the new, who had Authority to abrogate the old. Thirdly,

3. Therefore let us for ever join in this holy Communion and Fellowship unto which we are called; let us continually offer up this our Christian Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving, in Commemoration of the Sacrifice of the Death of *Christ*, and for the deriving thereby upon ourselves all the Benefits of his Death and Passion: This is the only Sacrifice we have to offer, a pure Offering of Bread and Wine, to refresh and strengthen, to support and nourish us unto eternal Life: When as now we are in Covenant, we shall come, in very Deed, *unto Mount Sion, and unto the City of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable Company of Angels; to the general Assembly and Church of the Firstborn which are written in Heaven.* And that we may all arrive at those blessed Mansions, may the God of Peace, that brought again from the Dead our Lord *Jesus*, that great Shepherd of the Sheep, thro' the Blood of the everlasting Covenant, make you perfect in every good Work, to do his Will; working in you that which is well-pleasing in his Sight, thro' *Jesus Christ*, to whom be Glory for ever and ever. *Amen.*

S E R M O N



## S E R M O N III.

The different Acceptance of  
the Offerings of *Cain* and  
*Abel*.



GEN. iv. 4, 5.

—*And the Lord had Respect unto  
Abel, and to his Offering:  
But unto Cain, and to his Offering, he  
had not Respect.*



FROM their several Offerings, we  
may now proceed, in the second  
Place,

II. To the different Acceptance they found.  
*The Lord had Respect unto Abel, and to his Of-  
fering: But unto Cain, and to his Offering, he  
had not Respect.*

This Difference of Regard must be owing,  
on the Part of *Cain*, to some Defect in the  
Of-

## 218 S E R M O N III.

Offering; or in the Offerer, or both; as God's Acceptance of *Abel* is a clear Indication that his Heart was right, and his Offering without any Spot or Blemish. By comparing them together, we shall soon discern the Reason of their different Success.

It is said, that *Cain brought of the Fruit of the Ground an Offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the Firslings of the Flock, and of the Fat thereof*; that is, not only of the *Firslings*, but of the choicest and fattest of them, and these he offered with Faith, and a perfect Reverence and Devotion; for so the Apostle testifieth: *By Faith Abel offered unto God a more perfect Sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained Witness, that he was righteous, God testifying of his Gifts; and by it he being dead, yet speaketh*, Heb. xi. 4. Here is no Preference given upon the Account that one Sacrifice was in itself preferable to the other, or that *the Firslings of the Flock* were more acceptable to God than *the Fruits of the Ground*: It was Faith alone that made the Sacrifice of *Abel* more excellent than that of *Cain*, and the same Faith, with which he offered, made him careful also of his Offering; whereas in *Cain*, besides Want of Faith in the Offerer, there might be also some Defect in the Sacrifice, owing even to his Want of Faith. It is true, indeed, had the Sacrifice been never so perfect, without Faith in the Offerer it had been unacceptable to God; but there might be, and probably there was, some Defect  
in

*Their different Acceptance.* 219

in the Sacrifice also: For he that cometh to God without Faith, is careless in what Manner he approacheth, and wherewith he cometh before the Lord. Hypocrites indeed may sometimes be very exact and punctual in the outward Performance, that they may be seen of Men, and make a Gain by a Shew of Godliness; having the Form without the Power thereof. See 1 *Tim.* vi. 5. 2 *Tim.* iii. 5. But, as yet, there were no secular Interests to be served, and the Spectators were too few to raise the Vain-glory, and feed the Pride of religious Ostentation. Without these Views, the Hypocrite acteth without Disguise, and sheweth the Profaneness by the Indevotion of his Heart; where nothing is to be got by an extraordinary Appearance, and something may be lost for want of an ordinary Appearance, he joins in religious Duties only to save Appearances, and brings nothing to recommend himself to the divine Favour but an absent Mind, and an unbelieving Heart. *Cain* possibly was no Hypocrite, but then he was prophane; he had not a due Sense and Reverence of the divine Majesty; and it is therefore no improbable Conjecture, that his Offering itself was defective, and that two Ways, as will appear by comparing it with *Abel's*.

For whereas *Abel brought of the Firslings of the Flock*, *Cain brought only of the Fruit of the Ground*; and whereas *Abel brought also of the Fat*, that is, the fairest and fattest Firslings;  
*Cain's*

*Cain's Offering* is distinguished by no Mark of Excellence, neither of the fullest Ears, nor of the finest Flour. There is no doubt but God claimed *the First-fruits of the Ground*, as well as *the Firstlings of the Flock*; the *Fruits of the Ground* are never mentioned as an Offering, except in this Place, but under the Name of *First-fruits*: And the not saying that *Cain brought of the First-fruits*, but saying only, that he *brought of the Fruit*, is at least an Indication, that he minded not whether they were the First-fruits, or no: And saying only, that *he brought of the Fruit*, without any Distinction that it was the best, plainly sheweth, that he took it carelessly at least as it came to Hand, without any Choice, or culling out the fairest and fullest from the rest. On the other Hand, there is particular Notice taken of *Abel's Offering* in both these Respects: He did not take any Lamb, at a Venture, but he chose out of *the Firstlings of the Flock*; and he did not take any Firstling that came to Hand, but he was careful and curious to single out the fairest and fattest in the Fold; as afterwards the Fat of the Sacrifice became the singular Commendation of the Offering. *Cain*, by offering any Fruit at a Venture, transgressed against the Institution: He might possibly imagine, as many since have done, that it signified little, whether he brought any Offering or no; and if he did, one Part of the Fruits might serve, as well as another; and that the First-fruits were no better than the

*Their different Acceptance.* 221

Heap. Why it may be so: God hath no Need of Sacrifice; and if the Hand be innocent, and the Heart be right, the smallest Cake is more valuable than an Hecatomb: But still, what God requires, we must perform; not because he wants it, but because it is our Duty; not to feast him with our Sacrifice, but to testify our Obedience to his Commands. In the Discharge of positive Duties, in every Oblation we make to God, tho' it be not properly a Sacrifice, *Abel* is our Pattern; and tho' we are no longer required to bring of the First-fruits, yet whatever we bring, whatever we give, we must do it in such a Manner, as that God may have Respect to us and our Offering; regarding, as above all he doth, the Devotion of the Heart, and the Faith of the Giver.

This leadeth us to the other Fault in the Sacrifice of *Cain*; for as there was a Defect in the Offering, there was a greater Defect in the Offerer, for he offered not in Faith: And in this Sense we may apply the Apostle's Words, *Whatsoever is not of Faith, is Sin*. So God had not Respect unto him, and to his Offering, there was a Fault in both; and though for the Fault of the Offerer, the Offering, otherwise never so perfect, will be rejected; yet, as it is here distinctly noted that *unto Cain, and to his Offering, God had not Respect*; we may conclude that his Sacrifice was rejected upon both Accounts, as the Offerer was impious, and as his Offering was defective.

But



## 222 S E R M O N III.

But *the Lord had Respect unto Abel, and to his Offering* : For by Faith *Abel* offered a more excellent Sacrifice than *Cain* ; and by accepting his Gifts, God bore Witness to his Righteousness, even the Righteousness which is of Faith, of that Faith which worketh by Love, *Rom. iv. 13. x. 6. Gal. v. 6.* I will only add this, in Aid of an Observation I made before, that if Sacrifices owed their Original to the Light of Nature in the Reasonings of Men upon their Duty to God, then *Cain* sinned against natural Religion ; and to offer Sacrifices, is a Duty not of instituted, but of natural Religion. On the other Hand, we cannot well conceive wherein the Faith of *Abel* was exercised, unless these Sacrifices had been commanded and instituted by God. It is a distinct Act of Faith to do any Thing besides the Duties of natural Religion, in Obedience to the divine Command ; and if these Sacrifices were ordained to keep up the Memory of the Promise made in the Woman's Seed, as Pledges of the Performance, and as Means in the Interval, till the promised Seed should come, of deriving the Blessings and Benefits of that Promise upon Men ; then the Faith of *Abel* is truly an evangelical Faith, and as such, indeed, it is celebrated by the Apostle, in that Passage of his Epistle to the *Hebrews* which I have both cited and referred to. Such are the Instances of Faith there recorded, not only that general universal Faith required by the Light and Law of Nature of all them that  
come

*Their different Acceptance.* 223

come unto God, to believe that HE IS, and that he is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek him; but also as that special Exercise of Faith whereby we obey the special Commands, and believe the special Promises of God. Such was the Faith of *Abel*, and *Enoch*, and *Noah*; of *Abraham* and the Patriarchs, and *Moses*; of *David* also, and *Samuel*; and of the Prophets, and of all the illustrious Roll here celebrated and recorded: For of them all, as well as of *Abel*, *Enoch*, *Noah*, and of *Abraham*, it may be said, these all died in Faith, not having received the Promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them: They all, like *Moses*, had Respect unto the Recompence of Reward; and when they were persecuted, they accepted not Deliverance, that they might obtain a better Resurrection; thereby declaring, that Faith is the Substance of Things hoped for, the Evidence of Things not seen. This is the Faith here spoken of; and *Abel* standeth the foremost in this glorious List, which leadeth us to the Author and Finisher of our Faith, to *Jesus*, the Mediator of the new Covenant, and to the Blood of Sprinkling, that speaketh better Things than that of *Abel*. But unto *Abel*, and to his Offering, he had Respect; for (give me Leave once more to repeat it) by Faith *Abel* offered unto God a more excellent Sacrifice than *Cain*, by which he obtained Witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his Gifts; and by it he being dead,  
yet

## 224 S E R M O N III.

yet speaketh. This is the last Particular to be explained.

In what Manner God had Respect to his Offering, and testified of his Gifts, is a Question which hath been much canvassed among the Learned, both *Jews* and *Christians*, the Original implying no more than Complacency and Acceptance: But that this Acceptance was testified in some visible Manner by some outward and significative Token, we may well conclude, from what followeth; that *Cain* was immediately sensible of the Difference, that his Brother's Sacrifice was accepted, and his rejected.

The most probable Opinion is, that God answered by Fire, and consumed the Sacrifice of *Abel*; and passed by, looked not upon, had not Respect unto the Offering of *Cain*, and touched it not from Heaven. This was the Manner in which he declared his Acceptance of Sacrifices afterwards offered to him; and in the *Hebrew* Phrase to *accept*, and to consume, particularly by turning the Sacrifice to Ashes, are Terms of the same Importance. Some have translated what we render *he had Respect*, he burnt, he fired the Offering of *Abel*; particularly *Theodotion* and *Aquila*, two singular Persons, who of *Christians* became *Jews*, and afterwards translated the Bible into *Greek*: Their Authority alone would be of little Weight, were it not confirmed by almost a general Concurrence both of the *Jewish* and *Christian* Writers. The Instances we meet with afterwards may serve to clear

*Their different Acceptance.* 225

clear up this, the first Sacrifice we have upon Record; and, not to mention those of a more publick Nature, and before Multitudes of People, I shall propose only those two private ones, as I may call them, offered by *Gideon* and *Manoah*, in the Book of *Judges*; where, of the one we read, that when *Gideon* had done as the Angel of God commanded him, *Then the Angel of the Lord put forth the End of the Staff that was in his Hand, and touched the Flesh, and the unleavened Cakes: And there rose up Fire out of the Rock, and consumed the Flesh and the unleavened Cakes,* Judg. vi. 21. And in Chap. xiii. we read, *Manoah took a Kid, with a Meat-offering, and offered it upon a Rock unto the Lord: And the Angel did wondrously, and Manoah and his Wife looked on. For it came to pass, when the Flame went up toward Heaven from off the Altar, that the Angel of the Lord ascended in the Flame of the Altar.* Upon both these Instances I would observe, first, that there was a Meat-offering, as well as a Kid, and that both were consumed by Fire; so that *Abel's* Offering being consumed, and *Cain's* not, *Cain* knew, that his Brother's Offering was accepted, and his rejected. I would observe secondly, that as in other Instances the Fire came down from Heaven, and fell upon the Sacrifice; in the first of these the Fire rose out of the Rock, as soon as the Sacrifice was touched by the Staff in the Angel's Hand; in the other, the Fire seemeth to have been kindled by

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*Manoah,*

## 226 S E R M O N III.

*Manoah*, and God shewed his Acceptance of the Sacrifice by the Angel's doing wondrously, and ascending in the Flame. Thirdly, I would observe, that these were both extraordinary or extra-legal Sacrifices: They were offered by *Gideon* of the Tribe of *Manasseh*, and by *Manoah* of the Tribe of *Dan*, and not by any of the Sons of *Aaron*; but when God commandeth every Man is his Priest, and every Rock his Altar. Fourthly, it may be said, that there is no Necessity of interpreting this Expression, having Respect unto *Abel's* Offering by the consuming it with Fire from Heaven; for any other visible Token may suffice; and as having Respect carrieth a Relation to the Eye and the Look, it may be no inconvenient nor improbable Interpretation, that the divine Presence might cast a Ray of his Glory over it, and, in the sacred Language, make his Face to shine, and lift up the Light of his Countenance upon it. Thus God accepted his Sacrifice by some visible Token, and by it *he being dead, yet speaketh*, and remaineth upon the holy Records an instructive Example of Faith and Righteousness.

Having thus explained this, the most ancient Piece relating to the primitive Worship of the World, I cannot make a better Conclusion of it, than by applying it to ourselves under all the Improvement and Instruction we may gather from it.

*Their different Acceptance.* 227

1. *First*, We may learn, that Faith is the grand Principle of our Justification in all our Approaches to God, and in all our Transactions with him: It is the great Principle of our Devotion and Obedience: It must be the Prayer of Faith, that saveth not only others, but our selves. *If any of you lack Wisdom, or Grace, let him ask of God, and it shall be given him, Jam. i. 5, 6. But let him ask in Faith.* Faith is also the great Principle of Obedience: *By Faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac, Heb. xi. 17. He believed God, and it was counted, imputed to him for Righteousness, Rom. iv. 3. Gal. iii. 6. Jam. ii. 23.* And let us steadfastly believe in him, for he is faithful and true; and, as St. Paul teacheth us, *it was not written for his Sake alone, that it was imputed to him, but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed if we believe on him, that raised up Jesus our Lord from the Dead, who was delivered for our Offences, and was raised again for our Justification.* Secondly,

2. In all our Sacrifices of Praise and Thanksgiving, and in all our Approaches to the Throne of Grace for Blessings, either public or private, we must remember also to offer up our Alms and Oblations, to honour God with our Substance, as well as our Lips: The Cost and Burden of the ancient Sacrifices is taken off; we are now left to the Largeness and Freeness of our own Hearts, to give unto the Lord; that is, to the Poor and Needy, to his Church and Service,



## 228 S E R M O N III.

vice, to the promoting of good Works, and to the propagating the Gospel both at Home, and Abroad also over all the World: These are acceptable Sacrifices, and so they are called by the Apostle. *To do Good, and to communicate, forget not; for with such Sacrifices God is well pleased,* Heb. xiii. 16.

To spend himself, and to lay down his Life in the preaching of the Gospel, the Apostle calleth also a Sacrifice, in his Epistle to the Philippians, ii. 17. *Yea, and if I be offered upon the Sacrifice and Service of your Faith, I joy and rejoice with you all.* Once more he calleth the Supplies they sent once and again unto his Necessity, a Sacrifice. *But I have all, and abound; I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the Things which were sent from you, an Odour of a sweet Smell, a Sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God,* Chap. iv. 18. Thirdly,

3. Let us remember to offer up whatsoever we give with Chearfulness, with Gladness, and Singleness of Heart; each of us, upon all proper Occasions, according to his Ability, with a willing and a ready Mind: *Every Man according as he purposeth in his Heart, so let him give, not grudgingly, or of Necessity: For God loveth a chearful Giver,* 2 Cor. ix. 7. Some Gifts have been offered by the Piety of former Ages, and they have been all confirmed by the Laws of the Land, but in many Cases you are left the Dispensers of them; and this is a great Advantage; a special Privilege, and you may

*Their different Acceptance.* 229

esteem it a singular Blessing: For hereby you have an Opportunity to abound in this Grace also, while ye pay with Chearfulness, without endeavouring to defraud or diminish, or to put off the worst, instead of the best of the Kind. *And God is able to make all Grace abound unto you, that ye always having All-sufficiency in all Things, may abound to every good Work,* 2 Cor. ix. 8.

Whenever we assemble to offer up unto God the great Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving in Remembrance of the Death and Passion of *Christ* our Saviour, let us offer it up with Faith and Devotion; let us draw near with a true Heart, in full Assurance of Faith, having our Hearts sprinkled from an evil Conscience, and our Bodies with pure Water in the Laver of Regeneration. As we are baptized into the Faith of *Christ*, let us communicate also with one another in Faith and Love. The Sacrifices, which went before, were Types of the Lamb to be slain; the Sacrament, which succeeds, is a Memorial of the Lamb slain, of *Christ* crucified for us. Let us not therefore, with *Cain*, who was of that wicked one, and slew his Brother, come without Faith and Charity, carelessly and irreverently to offer up our Christian Sacrifice; but, as *Abel* did, let us offer it up by Faith, that God may have Respect unto us, and to our Offering, and graciously accept us, for *Jesus Christ's* Sake: To whom, with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, be all Glory for ever. *Amen.*





## S E R M O N IV.

On the Anger and Resentment  
of *Cain* upon the Rejection of  
his Offering, and the Accept-  
ance of *Abel's*.



GEN. iv. 5, 6, 7.

—*And Cain was very wroth, and his  
Countenance fell.*

*And the Lord said unto Cain, Why  
art thou wroth? And why is thy  
Countenance fallen?*

*If thou doest well, shalt thou not be ac-  
cepted? And if thou doest not well,  
Sin lieth at the Door. And unto  
thee shall be his Desire, and thou  
shalt rule over him.*

 H E S E Words acquaint us with  
the Anger and Resentment of *Cain*,  
upon God's having Respect to the  
Offering of *Abel*, and not to his;  
and then they set before us God's kind and

## 232 S E R M O N IV.

gentle Expostulation with *Cain*, to convince him of his Fault, and at the same Time to comfort and encourage him, and to reclaim him to his Duty. I shall speak to these severally, as they follow in the Order of the Text.

1. *Cain was wroth, and his Countenance fell.*

Anger is a Passion raised by some Provocation given, or apprehended, at least, to be given: It generally riseth from the Thought of some Injury received, or intended. The Ground of *Cain's* Anger was the Acceptance of his Brother's Offering, and the Rejection of his, but chiefly the Acceptance of his Brother's: For if his Brother's had not been regarded, the Disregard of his own had not given him so much Concern. Wicked Men have no Care to please God, and content themselves with outward superficial Performances, provided they may go on quietly, without any Note of Displeasure, or the Acceptance of others before them; but they are jealous of their Honour and Interest, and cannot endure to see others distinguished with any Marks of Favour, while themselves are passed disregarded by. And if true Piety were in these Days to be distinguished by the Princes and Governors of the Earth, we should find the loose and Infidel Part of Men full of Anger and Resentment at seeing themselves neglected, while the Good and Virtuous are honoured and preferred: And surely it would be happy for the World, if no Man's natural

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Abilities were regarded without his moral, and no Man's Policy could make his Way, unless recommended by his Piety. There are generally some signal Advantages attending the royal Marks of Preference and Estimation; and tho' evil Men do not value the Praise of God, they are desirous of the Praise of Men, they are solicitous for their Prince's Favour, tho' they slight their Creator's: And if Princes minded their Court and Addressees no more than God regardeth their Offerings, if they had Respect to the religious and virtuous Man, and not to them; how would their Anger rise, and break out into Rage and Fury? And should it please God at any Time, by some visible Token of his Acceptance and Displeasure, to distinguish the Offerings and Devotions of good and evil Men; evil Men, tho' they fear not God, nor regard his Favour, would yet be mightily offended at his shewing any Disregard to them and their Offerings, and the more provoked at the Acceptance and Preference of good Men before them. The same Principles always prevail, and Anger is still raised from the same Causes and Apprehensions; however outward Circumstances may change and vary, the inward Affection, and Motion of the Heart, ever is the same. If God, by the secret Conduct of his Providence, doth eventually prosper the Endeavours of his faithful Servants; if his Blessing goes along with them, and giveth them Success in their Competitions with evil Men;



## 234 S E R M O N IV.

Men; the Ungodly presently are offended, and the whole Band of Misbelievers cry out against all Restriction and Distinction, and plead their natural Right to Place and Preferment, exclusive of any Regards to Religion, Establishment, or Constitution.

In those early Days, at the Beginning of the World, and many Ages after, it pleased God to appear visibly, and to speak audibly, to *Adam*, and the Sons of *Adam*; and then he made known, and expressed his Acceptance or Displeasure by some verbal Declaration, or signal Manifestation. Thus it was with Reference to the Offerings of *Cain* and *Abel*; and *Cain* very well understood that God accepted his Brother and his Offering, but rejected both his Sacrifice and him: Upon which *he was very wroth, and his Countenance fell.*

And now it may be proper to enquire, with whom he was wroth; whether with God, who gave the Preference; or with his Brother, who was preferred; or with himself, who was not respected. And here, if Things were duly considered, we should think, that, in the first Place, he should have been angry with himself.

For the Anger ought to fall there only, where the Fault is found. That God had not Respect to him and his Offering, was from himself alone; his Heart and his Sacrifice were both defective: His Heart, however, was not upright and sincere; and a Fault, a Flaw, and Hollowness in the Heart, will taint and spoil the

the best and purest Sacrifice that can be brought to the Altar. *Cain*, it is certain, came with Irreverence and Indevotion, without Faith in the Promises of God, and without Regard to his Favour: No wonder then that God had no Respect unto him.

He might argue, perhaps, as I have already intimated, and as his ungodly Children have since disputed, that God wanteth neither Sacrifices, nor Prayers; or if Prayers, not Sacrifices, nor Offerings. It is true, if we look upon him alone, he wanteth not any Thing that Man can do; neither our Sins, nor our Service; neither Prayers, nor Sacrifice: But it is for our Sakes that he commanded them. Prayer is a Duty of natural Religion, the natural Homage a Creature must pay to his Creator; Sacrifice is a Part of instituted Religion, and, when commanded by God, of the same Obligation, where it can be performed, with Prayer: But in both God looketh not to the outward Performance, but to the inward Disposition; not to the moving of the Lips, or lifting up of the Hands; but to the Pulse, and beating of the Heart. On his Part, Sacrifices are acceptable only as they are ordained by him; on Man's Part, only as they are offered in Faith and Devotion. Our Prayers themselves are no further acceptable, than they are preferred with a faithful and true Heart; but God, who requireth the Prayers of our Lips, required also the Sacrifice of our Hands, and both to be  
offered

## 236 S E R M O N IV.

offered by Faith, with a pure and religious Mind.

If it be further urged, that as the Sacrifice itself is of no Value with God, he needeth not the fattest nor the fairest Offering either from the Flock, or from the Field; we say again, it is very true, he needeth not either Sacrifice, or Prayers: But we must not argue from thence that it is indifferent whether Men offer any Sacrifices at all, or, if any, whether they be of the best, or the worst. God, who commanded Sacrifices, commanded them also to be of the very best; and tho' the Value of the Sacrifice be nothing, without the Heart, yet God will endure no Defect or Blemish in the Offering: We must not offer polluted Bread upon his Altar, nor think the Table of the Lord contemptible. *If ye offer the Blind for Sacrifice, is it not Evil?—Offer it now unto thy Governor, will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy Person? saith the Lord of Hosts.* To the same Purpose we may read the first Chapter of *Malachi*, from the fifth Verse to the End.

In this Manner *Cain*, if he reasoned upon the Point at all, might possibly argue with himself; in this Manner, however, those who would excuse themselves from all Offerings and Oblations, argue. Self-interest, like Self-love, in which it is founded, is ever partial and blind, and can see no Faults, but in others; and if we do see any in ourselves, Self-love is  
ready

ready to palliate and excuse them, to find out some Coverings and Softenings, some Mantle and Mitigation, to alleviate, or to hide them: But wicked and unbelieving Men do often take a shorter Method, and strike off at once all the Duties of instituted Religion, tho' at the same Time their Arguments are just as strong against natural, as against positive Duties; and if they conclude at all, they conclude against both alike: And because they see that the most devout Servants of God, who make a Conscience of discharging the outward Duties of Religion, are equally subject to all the Evils and Calamities of Life, they argue, with the Infidels represented by *Solomon*, Ecclesiastes ix. 2. *All Things come alike to all, there is one Event to the Righteous, and to the Wicked; to the Good, and to the Clean, and to the Unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: As is the Good, so is the Sinner; and he that sweareth, as he that feareth an Oath.*

This impious Doctrine is equally levelled, you see, against natural, as against instituted Religion: The Instances are made in both, and the Conclusion is as strong against Prayer, as against Sacrifice. It makes no Difference between the Righteous and the Wicked, the Saint and the Sinner; and, according to their Way of reasoning, he that sweareth falsely, is in no worse a Condition than he that feareth an Oath.

But

## 238 S E R M O N IV.

But God will always make a Difference between them; and if in the common Course of the World the Righteous are equally subject to Misery and Affliction with the Wicked, nay, altho' in some Cases they are more so, inasmuch as they often suffer from the Wicked, and for Righteousness Sake, yet still they have the gracious Answer and Assurance of God's Favour, and Acceptance within themselves; while the Prosperity of the Wicked, and the Sufferings and Persecutions of the Righteous, are evident Tokens of the righteous Judgment of God in the Salvation of the one, and Destruction of the other. Therefore be ye *in nothing terrified by your Adversaries, which, namely, their Threatnings and Persecutions, is to them an evident Token of Perdition, but to you of Salvation, and that of God*, Philip. i. 28. See to the same Purpose, *2 Thess. i. 4, 5, &c.* But even in this World the Righteous is not always miserable; as of Calamities, they have their Share also of Happiness: *For, as we read, the Wicked envieth at the Prosperity of the Righteous, and gnasheth upon him with his Teeth*, Psal. xxxvii. 12. cxii. 10. But when the great Distinction shall be made, and eternal Happiness and eternal Misery shall be the several Portion of the Righteous and the Wicked, then shall the Righteous be glad, and rejoice; but the Wicked, like *Cain*, shall be very wroth, and their Countenance shall fall for ever, in that *outer Darkeness, where shall be weeping, and*  
2 *gnashing*

## *The Anger of Cain.* 239

*gnashing of Teeth:* And then, when it is too late, they may be angry and displeased with themselves.

We may now proceed to enquire, *Secondly*, Whether his Wrath were against the Most High, against God himself, for respecting his Brother's Offering, and for not having Respect unto him, and to his Offering.

Among Men it is usual to see their Anger rise, not only against the Person who is preferred before them, but against him also who preferred the other to them. How far *Cain* might be guilty of this Behaviour towards God, is not to be determined from any positive exprefs Notices in the Text; but from other Parts of his Language and Behaviour it is very plain, that he carried himself rudely and irreverently to his Maker; particularly, in his Replies, when he was questioned for his Brother's Death. Those who are so foolish and prophane as to neglect and disregard God in their Thoughts, and Approaches to him, may likewise be so absurd, and impious, as to conceive a Displeasure, and vent their Blasphemies against the Most High. Instances of this desperate Folly we have afterwards in several Passages, where evil Men question the Being, and deny the Providence of God: *For the Adversary hath reproached, and the Enemy hath blasphemed his Name*, Psal. lxxiv. 10. *The Fool hath said in his Heart, there is no God*, Psal. xiv. 1. liii. 1. *and the foolish Man reproacheth him daily*, Psal. lxxiv.



240 S E R M O N IV.

lxxiv. 22. *He hath said in his Heart, God hath forgotten; he hideth away his Face, he will never see it, Psal. x. 11. How doth God know? Is there Knowledge in the Most High?* These Men will murmur and repine at the Dispensations of Providence, and when the afflicting Hand of God is upon them, rather than imitate the Faith and Patience, the Trust and Resignation of holy *Job*, they will follow the Counsel of that foolish Woman his Wife, or, which is all one, the Counsel of their own Heart; which is altogether as foolish as one of those foolish Women, and *curse God, and die*. For, as *Isaiah* prophesied, if they are *hardly bestead and hungry*, if others are preferred, and themselves neglected, *it shall even come to pass, that when they shall be hard set, and be hungry, they shall fret themselves, and curse their King, and their God, and look upwards, Isa. viii. 21.* This is the Way of them. But Thirdly,

3. Whether he were angry with himself at all, or whether his Anger were against the Most High, in any Thought or Degree; it is certain that *Cain* was much displeased, and very wroth with his Brother.

Such is the Pride and Envy of our Nature, that we can hardly endure to see Grace and Favour bestowed upon our Inferiors, or indeed upon our Equals, although ourselves are not wholly passed by, and neglected. Men are apt to reckon Favours done to others so many Injuries to themselves; and when they see those Honours

Honours placed upon others, which they accounted due unto themselves, there is hardly any Restraint or Bound of their Wrath and Indignation; and the Person so preferred, tho' never so innocent towards them, becomes the immediate Object of their Hatred and Revenge. They look upon him as the Injurer and Invader of their Rights, as a Bar and Obstacle in their Way, and never cease their Endeavours, either to supplant, or destroy him.

This seemeth to have been the Disposition of *Cain* towards his Brother *Abel*; he could not bear to think that God had Respect to *Abel*, and his Offering: He might not, perhaps, much regard whether himself and his own Offering were accepted; but he could not endure to be neglected, while his Brother was so signally respected. The visible Tokens of God's Favour and Acceptance, left him no Room todoubt that God had a Regard to human Actions; that he observed the Behaviour, and even the Hearts of Men; that his Favour followed the faithful and devout Worshipper, and that his Neglect and Displeasure were shewn upon the Careless and Prophane.

If we enquire more exactly into the Causes of *Cain's* Anger against his Brother, we shall find, that as it rose from the common Springs by which those violent Agitations of the Mind are excited, there was some special personal Cause which raised those black and bloody Passions in his Soul. This was, as we may collect

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## 242 S E R M O N IV.

from the following Words, no less than the Loss of his Birthright, and all the Privileges belonging thereunto. For God, as we shall see, in order to appease him, is graciously pleased to promise him the Rights and Privilege of his Birth: If he will but return, and do well, then he also shall be accepted; and yet, altho' Sin did now lie at his Door, there lay ready also an Offering and Atonement for it. He should still have the Pre-eminence above his Brother, *and his Desire*, saith the Lord, *shall be unto thee, and thou shalt rule over him.* The Birthright was accounted the greatest Blessing, and many Privileges and Pre-eminencies belonged unto it: It was especially, with Regard to *Cain*, the greatest Excellence that could ever fall upon the Sons of Men. He was the immediate Heir and Successor of *Adam*, and, after his Father, he would have stood at the Head of all Mankind: For altho' the several Families descended from *Adam* were co-ordinate and independent of each other, as so many Stems or Roots from whence his Posterity, according to their several Tribes and Septs, were afterwards derived; yet, among these, the eldest surely held the highest Place, and held a Priority of Order, tho' not an Authority of Jurisdiction. The Loss, and impairing of these Prerogatives, *Cain* could not think of, without Rage and Jealousy. Evil Men, tho' they regard not the Favour of God, do the more regard the Favour and Honours

## *The Anger of Cain.* 243

Honours of the World; this Ambition hath ever since been the Cause of Blood and Desolation in the Kingdoms of Men, and this Love of Pre-eminence hath also been the Cause of Heresy and Schism in the Church of God.

What Faith *Cain* had in the Promises of God, it is hard to say; it is most likely, he chiefly regarded temporal and worldly Greatness: But it is certain, that the primitive World had great Hopes and Expectations from the promised Seed; and *Eve*, when *Cain* was born, seemeth to have imagined she had obtained that promised Seed, when she said, *I have gotten a Man*, or, as it may, by way of Excellence, be rendered, *the Man from the Lord*: If this Consideration entered into the Mind of *Cain*, his Anger would still be the more fiercely kindled. Doubtless it was very great, and increased every Day, the more his Thoughts brooded over the Disgrace and Disfavour he apprehended he lay under, and the Favour and Pre-eminence to which he imagined his younger Brother was advanced.

*He was very wroth, and his Countenance fell.* Man is naturally of an erect and lively Aspect; an innocent and ingenuous Mind is of a cheerful and open Countenance; the black and furious Passions of Anger and Revenge blow up a Storm and Tempest in the Soul, which darkeneth the Face, and hangs upon the Countenance, and lowers in the Look; and these are so many Violences, Convulsions, and Dis-

## 244 S E R M O N IV.

tortions upon Nature, still more strong and violent, when the Conscience is roused with Guilt, as the Mind with Rage. A dark and cloudy Countenance, a downcast and gloomy Look, betray a guilty, as well as an enraged Mind; and disclose the black and bloody Thoughts on which it feedeth, to contrive and gratify the restless Calls of Envy and Revenge.

To prevent these cruel Effects, and to recal and restore this great Offender to the Peace and Serenity of his Mind again, God is pleased most graciously to interpose, and in the mildest and gentlest Terms to expostulate meekly with him; to shew him his Sin, to point out the Way to Pardon, and to encourage him to seek it.

But this must be the Subject of another Time, for at present I have Room to add no more, nor to conclude, as I intended, with such proper Reflections and Improvements as may be made upon what hath been already said: And therefore I shall only recommend to you, in few Words, that ye be careful to please God in all your Ways, and in all your Approaches to him; that you guard against every Motion of Anger and Revenge; that you keep your Souls innocent and calm; and that when any Displeasure arises from our own Misconduct or Folly, we turn our Anger where we find the Fault, upon ourselves; and never let us rest till by Repentance,  
Humi-

*The Anger of Cain.* 245

Humiliation, and Charity; by Faith, and Love, and Obedience, we are restored to the Peace of our own Minds, and to the Favour of God, through the Merits and Mediation of *Jesus Christ* our Saviour, that blessed Seed of the Woman who hath bruised the Serpent's Head.

To whom with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, be ascribed, as is most due, all Honour and Glory, and Worship and Blessing, all Might, Majesty, and Dominion, for ever and ever.  
*Amen.*









## S E R M O N V.

The Folly and Wickedness of  
Anger and Impatience, and  
the Duty of Submission and  
Repentance to God.



G E N. iv. 5.

— *And Cain was very wroth, and his  
Countenance fell.*



N my last Discourse I have set be-  
fore you the Anger and Resent-  
ment of *Cain* upon God's having  
Respect unto *Abel*, and to his Of-  
fering, and not to his. Under this Head I  
have considered the Cause and Provocation of  
his Anger, with Reference to God, his Brother,  
and himself; but before I proceed to God's  
gracious Expostulation with him, it may be of  
singular Use and Advantage, to see what pro-  
per Reflections and Improvement may be made  
upon what I have already delivered upon this  
Subject.

## 248 S E R M O N V.

1. In the first Place, we may consider the great Folly and Impiety of expressing any Anger or Resentment against God for any of his Dispensations or Dealings with us: If we cannot be restrained by a due Sense of the Impiety, we may perhaps be stopped by considering the prodigious Folly of such Behaviour, irrational and absurd in the highest Degree. For shall Man contend with his Maker, and discharge his Fury in the Face of the Almighty? What shall he answer, when God shall demand of him, *Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? And against whom hast thou exalted thy Voice, and lifted up thine Eyes on high?* 2 Kings xix. 22. Isa. xxxvii. 23. *Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than he?* 1 Cor. x. 22. Surely God pronounceth very justly; *Wo unto him that striveth with his Maker; let the Potsberds strive with the Potsberds of the Earth, [Let the Men, as brittle as the Potsberds of the Earth, contend with one another:] [But] shall the Clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? Isa. xlv. 9. Nay, but O Man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the Thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the Potter Power over the Clay, to make of the same Lump one a Vessel unto Honour, and another unto Dishonour?* Rom. ix. 20, 21. And shall Man, who is but Dust, and the Sons of Men, which dwell in Houses of Clay, dispute with him that made them,

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that formed them of the Dust of the Ground? What Madness, then, is it for Man to vent his Anger, and send his Defiance against Heaven? This surely is too outrageous. Yet those who murmur, and repine, and accuse the Ways of Providence, are guilty of little less than this desperate Height of Folly. When they relent not at his Calls, nor repent at his Chastisements, nor hear the Rod, nor regard his Judgment; these Men may be truly said to contend with God, and to arraign his Ways: But he that feareth the Lord, will submit to his Dispensations, and humble himself under his Corrections; will hearken to his Reproof, and obey his Voice: He will hear the Rod, and who hath appointed it; and will return and repent, and abhor himself in Dust and Ashes. In this also following the Example of holy *Job*, and of all God's faithful Servants, he will acknowledge his Truth and Faithfulness, his Power and Dominion, and in all Humility will submit unto him.

It is not only the extremest Degree of Folly, but it is also highly impious and prophane, to express any Anger or Discontent at the Ways and Dispensations of God: If reflecting upon the Folly is not able to with-hold us, we then go desperately on, and heighten our Folly with Impiety. Reverence and Fear, Humility and Resignation, become us in all our Approaches to God; we are not to dispute his Commands, and find Fault with his Ways; much less are  
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250 S E R M O N V.

we to think wickedly, that he is altogether such an one as ourselves, or presume to treat him with those hard Thoughts, and that angry Language, with which we assault one another. Piety to our Parents, which is the genuine Signification of the Word, consists not only in a dutiful Behaviour, but in reverent and respectful Thoughts; and the Honour we are commanded to pay them, must rise from the Heart; for from the Mouth only it is hollow and insincere. It is a great Length, indeed, to fly out into reproachful Language; but the Impiety is greater still, that harbours any dishonourable Thoughts of them in the Mind: How impious then, and blasphemous, is this Behaviour towards God? *A Son honoureth his Father, and a Servant his Master: If then I be a Father, where is mine Honour? And if I be a Master, where is my Fear? saith the Lord of Hosts, Mal. i. 6.* What, then, shall we pay less Regard to God, than to our Parents? *We have had Fathers of our Flesh, which corrected us, and we gave them Reverence; shall we not much rather be in Subjection to the Father of Spirits, and live? Heb. xii. 9.*

Worldly Blessings are not always the Portion of God's Servants, nor is temporal Felicity the constant Answer to their Prayers; what then? Shall we grow impatient and outrageous under his afflicting Hand? God forbid. Shall Christians fall into blasphemous Charges, and Expostulations with their Maker and Redeemer?

God

God forbid. Thus to behave, is like that Crew of *Atheists*, or worse than *Atheists*, mentioned by *Job*, xxi. 14, 15. *Who say unto God, Depart from us, for we desire not the Knowledge of thy Ways. What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? And what Profit should we have, if we pray unto him?* In like Manner, the idolatrous *Jews* vented their Blasphemies against the Lord their God, telling the Prophet *Jeremiah*, xlv. 17, 18. that they would proceed in their Idolatries, and burn Incense to the Queen of Heaven; for then, said they, we had Plenty of Victuals, and were well, and saw no Evil. But since we have left off to burn Incense to the Queen of Heaven, and to pour out Drink-offerings unto her, we have wanted all Things, and have been consumed by the Sword, and by the Famine. This is the very Stupidness of Folly, and the Height of desperate Impiety.

But, my Brethren, let us remember the Exhortation, which speaketh unto us as Children; *My Son, despise not thou the Chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him.* This is a Discipline we should improve under, and amend: It is designed for our Good, and inflicted to bring us nearer unto God: *For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every Son whom he receiveth,* Heb. xii. 5, 6.

It is true, the Perverseness of Man will defeat the good Purposes, and render the Grace of God in vain; will set at Nought his Counsel, and despise all his Reproof: Evil Men, like  
*Cain,*



## 252      S E R M O N   V.

*Cain*, tho' gently dealt with, will not turn, but go on still in their Wickedness, and grow worse and worse, till they fly out at last into Outrage and Blasphemy against their Maker. Whom the divine Chastisement doth not amend, it hardeneth; and desperate Wretches have worked themselves to that Pitch of Impiety, that they never mention the Name of God without the most horrible Oaths and Imprecations. I need not instance in Persons overwhelmed in great Calamities, who have undergone not half the Severity of the Trials, but without the Patience, of *Job*. These Instances, blessed be God, are very few; but I would rather turn your Eyes to the Examples of those who bring their own Misfortunes upon themselves, who vex and torment themselves for imaginary Evils, who are ingenious to turn the Blessings of God into Complaint and Discontent, and chuse, and contrive, and seek rather to quarrel with the happy Circumstances God hath placed them in, than to enjoy the Benefits, and bless the Benefactor. Hence arise Murmurings and Repinings, evil Thoughts and impious Expostulations, till they proceed, at length, to arraign, and condemn, and blaspheme the Providence of God.

But among all those who bring their own Sufferings and Misfortunes upon themselves, I would, were I able in the whole Compass of Language to express it, represent to you, in the liveliest Colours, those wretched Souls, who,  
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greedy of Gain, and impatient of Loss, hazard their whole Fortunes, and stake their Lives, as it were, upon the Turn of a Card, or the Cast of a Die; and when the Chances run against them, when the last Acre, or the last Shilling, is at Stake, and in two or three more Throws are gone; then, as I have heard it said, for I thank God I never saw it, then if any one were desirous to see a Picture or a Draught of Hell, and to have a Glimpse of the Rage and Blasphemy of the infernal Regions, let him but attend a While upon those losing Tables of Chance and Hazard. Not the Ravings of *Bedlam*, not the Rage of Wretches possessed even with a Legion of Devils, nor the loudest Blasphemies of apostate Spirits, can exceed the Madness, the Fury, the Oaths, and Execrations, of those Monsters, whose Avarice first led them into this destructive Folly, and whose Passions deform and disfigure human Nature to that Degree, that Man, of all Creatures, seems the most shocking and affrightful; while here they invent, or learn, and accustom themselves to speak the Language of the Damned. Uttering such Blasphemies upon Earth, they cannot belch out greater, and more terrible, in Hell.

It is enough to mention these; like a dreadful Piece, drawn by some masterly Hand, we need only look upon it, to deter us from the most distant Approaches to the outmost Confines

## 254 S E R M O N V.

finer of this desperate Folly, and transcendent Wickedness.

2. Let us consider the Unreasonableness of our being angry and displeased with our Brother, when *God hath a Respect unto him, and to his Offering.*

It is a Sign of a good and a gracious Heart, to be desirous of God's Favour, to be careful to obtain it, and fearful to lose it. There is a godly Jealousy, which is highly commendable, and maketh us ever diligent and watchful in the Discharge of our Duty; but this is never attended with an evil Eye, or any Anger and Resentment against our Brother. *Abel* had only done his own Duty in Faith and Devotion; he had not injured his Brother *Cain* at all: Had *Cain* done his Duty, he had been accepted also. That *God had not a Respect to him, and his Offering*, was not owing to *Abel*, but to himself alone: If *Abel* had not offered, still *Cain* had been rejected. There was, indeed, a Comparison, because there was a Distinction made between them; but had *Abel* offered as his Brother did, they had been both rejected. A good Man may advantage himself, but he can do no Prejudice to another. *Cain* is angry, because God is just; he conceiveth a Displeasure against his Brother, because God had declared his Pleasure in him: It was not so much his own Rejection, as the Preference of his Brother, that displeased him. *God had Respect*

unto

unto Abel, because he offered with a faithful Heart; and *Abel* should have been rather the Object of his Brother's Love, and an Example for his Imitation, than the Occasion of his Anger, and the Mark of his Vengeance.

Towards *Cain*, *Abel* was entirely innocent; and towards God, he had only discharged his Duty: But *Cain* had forgotten, and disregarded, and transgressed his Duty, to both. No sooner had he transgressed his Duty to God, but he transgressed his Duty to his Neighbour also: These two are the great and original Commandments respecting our Duty to God, and to each other; and on these two Commandments, concerning the Love of God and our Neighbour, do hang, as our Saviour most truly taught us, *all the Law and the Prophets*. All the Precepts concerning our Duty to God and our Neighbour, how numerous soever, how much enlarged soever, are all deduced from, and are all, as into their first Principles, resolved into these two great Commandments; *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, and thy Neighbour as thyself*. The first Neighbour of all Mankind was at the same Time, in the strictest Sense, a Brother; and still, in a Christian Sense, however we may distinguish in the natural and civil Sense, every Man's Neighbour is his Brother also: For I may say to all Christians as our blessed Lord said, upon another Occasion, to his Disciples; *For one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are Brethren*.

## 256 S E R M O N V.

*thren.* Under this endearing Relation *Cain* ought to have looked upon *Abel*, and to have rejoiced that his Brother was accepted, that *Abel* was not rejected as well as himself. God, we find, looked upon them both in this Relation; he demanded of *Cain*, *Where is Abel, thy Brother?* And the great Aggravation of his Guilt was, *The Earth hath opened her Mouth to receive thy Brother's Blood from thy Hand, and the Voice of thy Brother's Blood crieth unto me from the Ground.* And, if we look to the Provocation, another Aggravation is, that he hated him without a Cause. *Cain* had provoked God indeed, but his Brother had not provoked him; and while he was angry with his Brother, he did no less than upbraid and reproach his Maker, as if himself was unjustly rejected, and his Brother partially preferred before him: And so he thought wickedly, that God was altogether such a one as himself. Among Men, indeed, some may be favoured and preferred to others out of Weakness and Partiality, but God is no Respector of Persons; he, whosoever he be, that feareth him, and worketh Righteousness, is accepted of him. *Cain* should have looked into his own Heart, and searched into his own Spirit, if he would understand why God had not Respect unto him; for God is a righteous Judge: He trieth the Heart and the Reins, and he requireth Truth in the inward Parts. Men, in judging of one another, Men, even the best of them, may be mistaken; but  
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where God hath not Respect to any, there, we may be sure, is some great Fault, and considerable Defect. The Best are accepted, in his great Mercy; the Evil are, with great Justice, rejected. Thirdly, therefore,

3. Let us turn our Eyes, and our Anger, upon ourselves; not first sell our Birthright, and forfeit the Blessing, and then be enraged against our Brother. *Cain* had no Pretence of Anger against *Abel*, nor had *Esau*, strictly speaking, against *Jacob*; but the Fault was entirely in themselves alone: *Jacob*, indeed, bargained with *Esau* for the Birthright; and however hard and unbrotherly it may seem, to relieve his Hunger upon so high a Condition, and such rigid Terms, as not only to sell his Birthright, but to bind the Bargain, and confirm it with an Oath; yet *Esau*, for selling his Birthright, is represented in Scripture as a prophane Person, who valued not the Blessing that attended it. His Life, indeed, lay at Stake, and he was ready to die for Hunger; or rather, he was impatient, and struck with a strange Desire of those Lentils his Brother was eating: But whatever it was, tho' it were extreme Hunger that moved him, yet he is rightly blamed; for Life itself is to be forsaken, rather than God's Blessing; and his Contempt of his Birthright is much heightened by his Impatience: For, in a little Time, had he but run to his Father's or his Mother's Tent, he had found wherewithal to assuage his Hunger. *Cain* seems to have



## 258 S E R M O N V.

put a juster Value on his Birthright; he could not bear the Thought, that it should be transferred to *Abel*; but then he took no Care to secure it to himself: And afterwards, tho' assured of it by God, yet he distrusted his Word, or would not be careful to do well, and thought no Way so effectual to make it sure, as by the Murder of his Brother. But he ought to have repented of his Sin; and however out of Jealousy and Envy he had conceived an Hatred and Displeasure against his Brother, he ought to have relented towards him, and turned all his Wrath and Indignation upon himself; for the Fault was entirely in himself alone. When we observe the Favour of God extended to our Brethren, and feel any Marks of his Displeasure against ourselves, it is, no doubt, very grievous and displeasing to us; and tho' our Eyes are sealed up and blinded thro' Self-love and Partiality, and we are apt to express our Anger against others, rather than ourselves; yet we can never regain the divine Favour, till we are truly sensible of our Faults, and turn our Anger from our Brother upon ourselves: Then only it is placed where it should be, and we cannot be truly convinced of our Sins without Anger and Displeasure at our own Folly, Carelessness, and Ingratitude: It is then, and not till then, we shall turn and repent, and smite our Thigh, and smite upon our Breast, and cry out, with the deepest Sense and Compunction, What have we done? We shall then sorrow unto  
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Repentance, when we are sorry after a godly Sort. For, as St. Paul teacheth the *Corinthians*, *Godly Sorrow worketh Repentance unto Salvation not to be repented of: For behold, this self-same Thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly Sort, what Carefulness it wrought in you; yea, what clearing of yourselves; yea, what Indignation; yea, what Fear; yea, what vehement Desire; yea, what Zeal; yea, what Revenge!* 2 Cor. vii. 10, 11. Thus our Indignation and Vengeance will fall upon ourselves and our Sins; and when we are reproved by those who have the Authority of Parents, Pastors, or Governors over us, we shall not kick at their Reproof, nor conceive a Prejudice and Hatred to them; but we shall rather thankfully and lovingly receive their Admonitions, and amend our Ways.

To conclude; in all our Approaches to God we must remember that he will not endure either Wickedness in our Hearts, or Irreverence in our Behaviour: We must keep our Foot, when we come into the House of God, and consider, that the Ground whereon we stand, and whereon we tread, is holy Ground. When we come to his holy Table, especially to offer there our Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving, in Remembrance of that great Sacrifice of the Death of *Christ*, once offered for the Sins of the whole World, take we Heed, that we come not carelessly and indevoutly with our Sins, and with the Love and the Cares of the World about us: The Supper of the Lord is compared

## 260 S E R M O N V.

to a Marriage-feast, and when we come thither we must have on our Wedding-garment; we must throw aside our polluted Raiment, tho' it be made of purple and fine Linen: For the Linen we are to be arrayed in must be white and clean also, which is the Righteousness of the Saints; we must cast away the Works of Darkness, and we must put upon us the Armour of Light, even the whole Armour of God. Divesting ourselves of Pride, we must be clothed with Humility, with the Ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit, which is, in the Sight of God, of great Price: We must put off the old Man, with his Deeds, and we must put on the new Man, which after God, or a second Time after the Image of God, is created in Righteousness and true Holiness; and, together with the new Man, we must put on also, as the Elect of God, Bowels of Mercy, Kindness, Meekness, Long-suffering, Charity; that so with pure Hearts and Minds we may offer a pure Offering upon God's Altar in Faith: That so he may have Respect unto us, and to our Offering, and mercifully accept us, even for *Jesus Christ's Sake. Amen.*

To whom, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, be all Glory for ever. *Amen.*



## S E R M O N VI.

God's Expostulation with *Cain* upon his Anger, and the Means of regaining the Divine Favour pointed out to him in the Terms of Acceptance.



GEN. iv. 6, 7.

*And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? And why is thy Countenance fallen?*

*If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou doest not well, Sin lieth at the Door. And unto thee shall be his Desire, and thou shalt rule over him.*



WE have already seen the first Instance that is recorded of primitive Worship in the several Offerings of *Cain* and *Abel*; we have also seen the different Regard

## 262 S E R M O N VI.

and Acceptance, themselves and their Offerings found at the Hands of God: *The Lord had Respect unto Abel, and to his Offering; but unto Cain, and to his Offering, he had not Respect.* Some Fault there was, some great Defect, both in the Offerer, and the Offering. With Regard to the Offerer, we are assured, that by Faith *Abel* offered a more excellent Sacrifice than *Cain*; with Regard to the Offerings, *Abel brought of the Firstlings of the Flock, and of the Fat thereof*; whereas *Cain brought only of the Fruit of the Ground*, without any Distinction, that it was either of the First-fruits, or the best: And, indeed, the Defect of his Sacrifice may be imputed to the Defect of his Faith; for what we translate *more excellent*, literally signifieth, *a greater, a more abundant, a richer Sacrifice.* A faithful Heart is always accompanied with a liberal Hand, and he that considereth to whom he offereth, will consider also what he offereth, and his Faith will be evidenced by his Works.

Faith (as I have observed) is both a Principle, and a Duty, of natural Religion; and however the external Part of divine Worship is always of positive Institution, the internal, which ever consists in Faith, and Truth, and Purity of Mind, must always accompany the external Part, or the outward Performance will not be accepted. I would only observe, since this Point is fallen once more in my Way, that an external instituted Worship is as agreeable to natural Reason, as is publick  
Worship

*God's Expostulation with Cain.* 263

Worship itself; and altho' natural Reason cannot prescribe and direct what Sort of external Worship will be acceptable to God, yet when it pleaseth God to appoint the Offerings, natural Reason will tell us, not only that it is our Duty to offer, but that the Offering is of no Value in itself, but only as it is required by God, and afterwards offered with true Faith and Devotion. So that *Cain* might easily be convinced, that himself was in the Fault, when God had no Respect to his Offering; and if no other Defect was to be found, his Want of Faith alone was enough to render his Sacrifice unacceptable. However, so partial is Man, the meer natural Man, to himself, and so jealous and envious of others, that he cannot bear any Neglect or Disregard; especially if such Neglect of him be the more signalized and conspicuous by the Respect and Preference given to another.

This *Cain*, we find, was not able to bear; and tho' he could not be angry with his Brother without reproaching his Maker, yet we find him altogether desperate, and abandoned to Rage and Revenge: *He was very wroth, and his Countenance fell.*

So far I have proceeded in this Passage; and now it pleased God most graciously to interpose, with a mild and gentle Expostulation: *Why art thou wroth, and why is thy Countenance fallen?*



## 264 S E R M O N VI.

I have, in my last Discourse, made a Sort of a Pause, as it were, upon this Period, to see what Improvements we might make from this Anger, and Gloominess, and Discontent of *Cain*; and now we may go on, as I proposed, from the Wrath of *Cain* to God's gracious Expostulation with him: *Why art thou wroth? And why is thy Countenance fallen? If thou dost well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou dost not well, Sin lieth at the Door. And unto thee shall be his Desire, and thou shalt rule over him.*

In this Expostulation we have these several Parts, which deserve a particular Consideration.

- I. The gracious Method God, in his great Mercy, taketh to convince *Cain* of the Unreasonableness of his Anger, in these gentle Terms: *Why art thou wroth? And why is thy Countenance fallen?*
- II. The Means he pointeth out to him, whereby to regain the divine Favour and Acceptance: *If thou dost well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou dost not well, Sin lieth at the Door.*
- III. The Encouragement here offered that he should return to his Duty: *And to thee shall be his Desire, and thou shalt rule over him.* In this Expostulation we have, first,

I. The

*God's Expostulation with Cain.* 265

I. The gracious Method which God, in his great Mercy, taketh to convince *Cain* of the Unreasonableness of his Anger: *Why art thou wroth? And why is thy Countenance fallen?*

These Questions do not suppose that the great Creator wanted to be informed, but they are proper to awaken *Cain's* Consideration, to raise in him just Thoughts and Reflections, and thereby to bring him to a true Sense of his Condition. There is hardly that Wretch to be supposed, who is so desperate and abandoned, as to have no Regard for the divine Favour or Displeasure: *Cain* could not endure to see his Brother accepted, and himself rejected. Whether he had just Thoughts of God's Acceptance, or not, he was very wroth that God had Respect unto his Brother, and not to him: Both Ways he seems to have been deeply affected; and however his Rage and Perturbation might blind him for the present, the Voice of God, we may imagine, would awaken his Attention, and recal him to himself. We do not find, indeed, that he returned any Answer to the Questions, so gently and affectionately proposed; perhaps he was silent and sullen, and turned a deaf Ear to this mild and winning Address, and Application of God to his vain, proud, poor, sinful Creature: But the Expostulation itself is not the less proper to have brought him to a due Sense of his Condition. If he was so wilful and obstinate,

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## 266 S E R M O N VI.

as not to repent, not to leave off his Wrath, and let go Displeasure; he was, nevertheless, convicted both of God's Readiness to receive him, and of his own great Sin and Wickedness in despising these gracious Offers, and remaining deaf and inexorable to his Calls.

Nothing is wanting in God's Goodness to warn and invite Men to Repentance; their own Blindness, and Passion, and Hardness of Heart, are the true Causes that they regard not the Offers and Encouragements of the divine Mercy. Let *Cain* give Ear only to these tender Questions, and think only what Answer he ought to return, and then he will look with other Sentiments, and other Eyes, upon his Brother and himself: *Why art thou wroth? And why is thy Countenance fallen?* His Countenance fell, because *he was very wroth*; this was a Consequence of his Anger and Discontent: But let him consider only with whom, and for what Reason he is angry. Is he angry with his Maker? This possibly, as we have stated it, might be the Case; foolish Men will think and speak reproachfully of God; they will behave themselves rudely and irreverently in his Presence; and *Cain*, as hath been said, might possibly have been so very stupid, and so desperately wicked, as to be wroth with God at the Disregard and Rejection of him and his Offering; at least he was very wroth, because his Brother was accepted. Men are ever fondly partial to themselves, blind to their

*God's Expostulation with Cain.* 267

own Failings, and so very weak and foolish, as to expect that God should be partial to them also; but God is not unrighteous to forget, nor unmindful to disregard the Faith and Piety of his Servants: He is faithful and just to have Respect to the Prayers and Offerings of those that fear him, and to shew his Displeasure against those that approach him in an irreverent and careless Manner. Is *Cain* angry with his Brother? *But why art thou wroth? And why is thy Countenance fallen?* Thy Brother brought his Offering in an acceptable Manner; ought he and his Offering to be rejected, when thou only, and thy Offering, art defective? Is there, thinkest thou, any Respect of Persons with God? Shalt thou be accepted because thou art the eldest? And shall not thy Brother be accepted because he is righteous? Strictly speaking, the Acceptance of the best and holiest of the Sons of *Adam* must be resolved into the great Mercy and Goodness of God extended to his faithful Servants, notwithstanding their manifold Frailties and Imperfections; but whenever God is said not to have Respect to the Offerer, nor to his Offering, we may be assured that the Heart and the Hand of that Person are not clean and pure, and single and upright, as they ought to be.

This was the Reflection *Cain* ought to have made: If he would be wroth, he should have been angry with himself; if his Countenance fell, it should have been from a Sense and Sorrow

## 268 S E R M O N VI.

Sorrow of his Sins; and when it pleased God thus to call him, and expostulate with him, this great Condescension, this gentle Treatment, this Goodness of God, should have opened his Eyes, and softened his Heart, and led him to Repentance.

This leads, however, to the second Thing proposed, namely,

II. The Means here pointed out to *Cain*, whereby he might recover the divine Favour and Acceptance: *If thou dost well, shalt thou not be accepted? And if thou dost not well, Sin lieth at the Door.*

God is never wanting to his Servants, to direct and assist them in their Duty; his Grace, we see, is extended even to the Sinful and Disobedient, to turn and reclaim them from the Error of their Ways: Their Duty he will exact, and likewise the right Performance of it. Let us examine ourselves, and try our Hearts, and search out our Spirits, and see if there be no Root of Bitterness springing up, no Particle of Leaven fermenting in our Souls. We cannot oppose absolute Perfection to this our imperfect State, this is not required of us; but we can oppose an Integrity of Heart, an unfeigned Sincerity of Mind, an earnest Desire after Perfection, a Sense of our Unworthiness, a Sorrow for our Sins, and a true Repentance: This, by the Grace of God, we may do; for all this he will enable us to do, and accept us

*God's Expostulation with Cain.* 269

in it. Alas! we can only approach unto the Throne of Grace as Sinners, we can come before our heavenly Father under no other Character; as such only are we the Objects of God's Mercy in *Christ Jesus*; as such only are we received to Pardon, to Happiness, and Glory. It is not, therefore, our being Sinners, but being presumptuous unrepenting Sinners, which maketh our Offerings and Prayers an Abomination unto the Lord. When we presume to come before him with Hypocrisy in our Hearts, and Wickedness in our Hands; when we shew not any Faith in his Promises, nor Fear of his Name, nor Obedience to his Commands; when we approach with Irreverence and Indevotion, without the Love of our Maker, or Charity to our Brother; these, or any of these, provoke God to turn away his Face from our Prayers, and to have no Respect to our Offerings: For herein we do not well, and shall not be accepted; and Sin lieth at the Door. If thou dost not well, thou only art to blame; thou only art answerable for it; the Sin is thine own, and upon thee alone will the Punishment of it be inflicted. In this Representation also of the Case, *Cain* might see the Unreasonableness of his Anger: If he did well, God assureth him he shall be accepted, as his Brother was; but if he did not well, the Sin lay at his own Door. Sin is the only Bar and Hindrance of his Acceptance.



## 270 S E R M O N VI.

Concerning these Words, *Sin lieth at the Door*, there are several Senses and Interpretations given, and all proper to awaken and move *Cain* to Repentance; I shall mention only three, each and every of which he might have improved to his spiritual Advantage, in returning to his Duty, and recovering the Favour and Acceptance of Almighty God.

1. The first is, according to the plain Signification of the Words in our Translation, *If any Man transgresseth, the Sin lieth at his own Door*: This is true in all solitary and personal Transgressions in which there are no Accomplices, and no Communication of Guilt; there the Sin terminates, and resteth with him alone. In these Offerings of *Cain* and *Abel* the Act was personal, each offered distinctly by himself, and the Acceptance of their Offerings severally depended upon the Disposition of their own Hearts, and the Mercy of God. So every Man believeth, and feareth, and worshippeth God, for himself alone; tho' we all join in the publick Congregation, yet every Man shall be singly accepted according to the Frame and Devotion of his own Heart: And however publick Prayers may derive down publick Blessings, upon the Account of many pious Persons who do most heartily and devoutly join in the publick Worship; yet every particular Person is accepted or not accepted, according to his special Disposition and Behaviour. Thus Religion is of a personal, as well as publick

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Concern;

*God's Expostulation with Cain.* 271

Concern; and every Man's Acceptance with God terminates finally in himself, and depends upon his own Faith and Conversation, such as becometh the Gospel of *Christ*. We do stand or fall therefore by our private Behaviour in our publick Profession: If any Man doth not well, the Sin lieth at his own Door; and in the Discharge of the publick Duties, and Profession of Religion, if he offendeth in his external Carriage and Demeanor, he hath, besides the Sin of his own Heart, which God only seeth, he hath also lying at his own Door the Sin of Irreverence, and an unchristian Behaviour, which the Congregation also do see, and every devout Worshipper is grieved to behold. In *Cain* and *Abel* we have for our Instruction the History of their Offerings, and their several Success; in the Gospel our blessed Lord hath thought fit to instruct us in the Rule and Success of our Devotions, by a Parable, which may serve for an Illustration of the Point before us: *Two Men went up into the Temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a Publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other Men are.* He came near, and recounted his good Deeds, and abused his Neighbours, the poor Publican especially. But the Publican standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his Eyes unto Heaven, but smote upon his Breast, saying, *God be merciful to me a Sinner!* I tell you, saith our blessed Lord, *this*  
Mar:

## 272 S E R M O N VI.

*Man went down to his House justified rather than the other: That is, the Publican, like Abel, was accepted; the Pharisee, like Cain, was rejected. This being proposed as a Parable, holdeth in all like Cases, and sheweth, that a proud uncharitable Spirit will never be accepted; but the Prayers of the Poor and Humble shall enter into the Ears of the Lord of Sabbaoth, and their Sacrifices shall come up with Acceptance upon his Altar. For though the Lord be high, yet hath he Respect unto the Lowly; as for the Proud, he beholdeth them afar off. Humility, Faith, and Charity, are the best Companions of our Prayers; according as we come, each Man, we find, is accepted, or rejected, for himself: If any Man doth not well, Sin lieth at his Door. The Sin and the Guilt is his own.*

2. A second Interpretation is, *If thou dost not well, the Punishment of Sin awaiteth thee, and is even at the Door. If any Man doth not well, the Sin, in the first Place, lieth upon his Conscience, and is imputed to him; and if he doth not repent, Punishment is at Hand, and will break in upon him. Sin, and the Punishment of Sin, are often put for each other; particularly in this Chapter we find Cain replying, My Punishment, or my Iniquity, is greater than I can bear. And the Angels, we read Gen. xix. 15. hastened Lot out of Sodom, lest, say they, thou be consumed in the Iniquity, or Punishment, of the City. So surely is Punishment*

*God's Expostulation with Cain.* 273

nishment the indivisible Follower and Companion of Sin, that nothing can remove the Punishment, but taking away the Sin ; otherwise the Ax is laid to the Root of the Tree, and Punishment lieth at the Door. This is a merciful and gracious Warning to awaken Men out of their carnal Security, and bring them to Repentance; that so they may find Pardon and Acceptance at the Throne of Grace, and the Sin and the Punishment, which lieth at the Door, may be removed far from them.

3. The third Sense and Interpretation of these Words is a singular and most gracious Call unto Repentance, by removing all Cause of Despondency and Despair, and giving unto *Cain* the firmest Assurance of Pardon and Acceptance: *If thou dost well, shalt thou not be accepted? If thou dost not well, yet despair not, but repent; for an Offering, or Atonement, lieth at the Door.* Repent, and be no longer wroth; but be reconciled unto thy Brother, and then come, and bring thy Gift unto the Altar.

*Moses*, in this History, might use the sacrificial Language, which was derived from the Patriarchs, and that, which was afterwards more expressly taught him, when he delivered the Law; and as it is a usual Figure to call the Sacrifice or Atonement by the Name of the Transgression, for which it was offered; here also it may be understood, that upon his Transgression an Offering and Atonement lay ready

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## 274 S E R M O N VI.

for him : For as God did afterwards command the Sacrifices of Atonement to be brought to the Door of the Tabernacle, here the Expression may likewise signify, that both the Altar and the Offering were at Hand, and an Atonement lay just ready, as it were, at the Door.

The Sacrifices appointed to the Patriarchs, and afterwards to the *Jews*, are now all ceased, and concluded in the great Sacrifice of the Lamb of God, who gave Virtue and Efficacy to all former Sacrifices, as they had any Relation or Reference to him : And now that *Christ* hath once appeared, in the Fulness of Time, to put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself, the Merits of that great Sacrifice are effectually applied to every one, that truly and faithfully commemorates his Death, in partaking of the sacred Symbols and Memorials of it. *If any Man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous; and he is the Propitiation for our Sins.*

III. In the third and last Place I am to lay before you the Encouragement here offered unto *Cain*, that he should return to his Duty: *And unto thee shall be his Desire, and thou shalt rule over him.*

This gracious Assurance following immediately upon these Words, *Sin lieth at the Door*, hath inclined several Expositors to interpret *Sin* for the Offering and Atonement, as we have just now seen; and then the Sense of the Whole will

*God's Exposition with Cain.* 275

will be, *If thou dost well, thou shalt most certainly be accepted; and if thou dost not well, still there is at Hand an Atonement for thee: And notwithstanding I have had Respect unto Abel, and to his Offering, yet still thou shalt maintain the Prerogative of thy Birth, and Superiority to thy Brother. His Desire shall be unto thee, he shall be subject unto thee, and thou shalt rule over him.* In the third Chapter of *Genesis*, where God establisheth the Authority of the Man over the Woman, and the Subjection of the Woman to the Man; the same Words are made Use of, and may serve to instruct us, among other Things, that this Subjection was originally founded in Nature; and that Man either had not forfeited his Authority by the Fall, or, if he had, by this Declaration it was restored to him; and the Woman, who could not govern herself, was from henceforth, in her Desires, Inclination, and Will, to be controlled and governed by the Man.

From both these Passages we may learn, that Dominion is not founded in Grace; and that however Sinners may forfeit God's Favour, they do not forfeit their natural and civil Rights, with Respect to those, who are placed in Subjection to them. In the first Instance *Eve* was as much a Sinner as *Adam*, indeed much more, as she was first in the Transgression, and did also tempt her Husband to transgress: Yet, without considering her Offence, as it were not just, that she should gain any Privilege



## 274 S E R M O N VI.

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*God's Expostulation with Cain.* 275

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## 276 S E R M O N VI.

vilage by his Weakness, it pleased God to declare and confirm his Authority over her. The other Instance secures to *Cain*, and to all Mankind, the Privileges and Prerogative of his Birthright, that is, to every one his civil Rights and Privileges, whatsoever they be, till they are forfeited by some overt and notorious Acts, which offend against the natural or the civil Laws of Men, as well as the Laws of God, incorporated into, and made a Part in the Body of human Laws: Otherwise all Offences against God are beyond the Jurisdiction of Men, any further than as human Laws do make the Transgression of divine penal upon the outward Act, and due Conviction.

Whether *Abel* were subject to *Cain*, as his eldest Brother, any further than a Subjection of Order and Priority, is a Question, which we cannot, even from these Words, full and plain as they are, determine: That they were both subject to *Adam*, we do most indubitably conclude; and that *Abel* was not subject unto *Cain*, while their great Father was yet alive, we do most reasonably infer; but that there were some Privileges belonging to the First-born, is, at the same Time, very evident, otherwise these Words are of no Signification: But what those Privileges were, more than those of Preference and Order, we cannot say; only whatever they were, they remained sure unto him, until he forfeited the common Rights of Mankind by the Murder of this his Brother.

The

*God's Expostulation with Cain.* 277

The Privileges of his Birth, perhaps those of Authority and Command, after *Adam*, were certainly very great; his Jealousy of losing them, when he saw, that in God's Favour *Abel* was preferred before him; raised and fomented his Anger and Revenge: And nothing could be thought of so effectual to pacify and compose his Thoughts, as this gracious Assurance, that he also, if he did well, should be accepted; and that, notwithstanding his Sin, yet his Brother should not be preferred, in any Privileges of his Birth, before him.

Permit me to add, that for ourselves, we shall act most wisely, to look up to our Birthright and Inheritance in Heaven. Here our Lot may be poor and miserable, as it is short and uncertain; there only, it will be glorious, happy, and eternal. If we do well, we shall be accepted; and if we do not well, let us return, and repent, and we shall be accepted. Let not Sin lie at the Door, neither the Guilt, nor the Punishment of it; but let us lay hold of the Atonement and Propitiation which lieth there, and the Blood of *Christ* shall cleanse us from all Iniquity: To whom, with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, be all Glory for ever. *Amen.*

The Privileges of the Church, which were  
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 and that notwithstanding his sin, yet in the  
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 be most and profitable, as it is short and un-  
 certain; there only, it will be glorious, happy,  
 and eternal. If we do well, we shall be ac-  
 cepted; and if we do not well, for us remain  
 and reject, and we shall be rejected. I fear not  
 that he is the Door, neither the Gate, nor the  
 Foundation; but let us lay hold of this  
 Assurance and Propitiation which lies there,  
 as the blood of Christ shall cleanse us from all  
 iniquity. To whom, with the Father, and the  
 Holy Spirit, be all Glory for ever, Amen.

## S E R M O N VII.

God's Arraignment of *Cain* for the Murder of *Abel*, and *Cain's* rude and irreverent Behaviour.

GEN. iv. 9, 10, 11, 12.

*And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy Brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my Brother's Keeper?*

*And he said, What hast thou done? The Voice of thy Brother's Blood crieth unto me from the Ground.*

*And now art thou cursed from the Earth, which hath opened her Mouth to receive thy Brother's Blood from thy Hand.*

*When thou tillest the Ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her Strength. A Fugitive and a Vagabond shalt thou be in the Earth.*



**W** H E N *Cain* found that his Brother's Sacrifice was accepted, and his rejected, he was very wroth, and his Countenance fell: He swelled with Envy, Anger, Indignation, and Revenge. The



## 280 S E R M O N VII.

Clouds on his Brow shewed the Storm and Tempest rising in his Breast: His Countenance, like the Sky, was overcast, and foreboded the bloody Tragedy that ensued. Thus as he went along with a furious and gloomy Look, full of black Thoughts, and murderous Intentions, it pleased God to interpose, and, in the mildest and most gracious Manner, to reason and expostulate gently with him: He endeavoureth to raise him from Despondency and Despair; he assureth him of Pardon, upon Repentance, and of Acceptance, upon his doing well; and to take off all Thoughts of Anger and Jealousy against his Brother, God is pleased in a more particular Manner to assure him, that notwithstanding he had Respect unto *Abel*, and his Offering, and had given him the Preference upon a spiritual Account; yet nevertheless *Cain* should still enjoy his temporal Pre-eminences, and retain all the Prerogatives and Privileges of his Birth: The Favour of God should not exempt his Brother from that Subjection Nature had placed him in, nor should *Cain*, tho' his Sacrifice was not respected, lose any Thing of his Authority. This mild and gentle Expostulation I have set before you at large, and have likewise opened unto you this gracious Assurance, so proper and well adapted to abate his Anger, and assuage his Envy, by thus saving unto him all the temporal Advantages and Privileges of his Birthright. As he seemeth, by his Sacrifice,

*Cain's Arraignment and Reply.* 281

to have been a Man of a prophane and worldly Mind, who regarded not what he offered unto God, and thought any Thing good enough for his Maker; he had, we may conclude, a greater Regard for his temporal, than for his spiritual Estate; and therefore, by assuring that unto him, God took the most effectual Method to calm and pacify his troubled and outrageous Mind. He had Encouragement to hope for God's Favour, he had Assurance given him that his temporal Rights, which, it seemeth, he most valued, should be reserved unto him: But all this gracious Condescension, all this Mildness and Love, was lost upon his hard Heart, and evil Nature, like Rain on barren and unfruitful Ground: He still meditates Revenge and Blood, and sitteth and broodeth upon his black and gloomy Thoughts, till he hath ripened them into Resolution, and produced them into Act, and imprinted and recorded them in Blood.

Thus from Anger he proceedeth to Murder; the divine Goodness made no Impression upon him, and he relented not for all that mild Remonstrance, and gracious Interposition; but, as evil Men ever since have done, he grew worse and worse. *And Cain talked with Abel his Brother, and it came to pass as they were in the Field, that Cain rose up against Abel his Brother, and slew him.* Whether by talking with his Brother, we are to understand any Dissimulation of Friendship, as if he were  
recon-



Cain's offering

movement: I feel, however, that the  
White man and the colored man are  
not, and should not be, separated  
common, I believe, and the colored man  
and the white man will live together.

I feel, however, that the colored man  
God will bless the colored man  
and the white man will live together  
and the colored man will live together  
and the white man will live together.

II. The colored man will live together  
and the white man will live together  
and the colored man will live together  
and the white man will live together  
and the colored man will live together  
and the white man will live together.

III. The colored man will live together  
and the white man will live together  
and the colored man will live together  
and the white man will live together  
and the colored man will live together  
and the white man will live together.

This is the first time that the colored man  
is will affect the colored man for the colored man  
course. In the mean time I am sure

I To

I. To the first Point: The Cognizance God taketh of the Fact, or the Arraignment of the Criminal, together with his rude and irreverent Behaviour: *And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is thy Brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my Brother's Keeper?*

This is the second grand Inquest made upon capital Offences. The first was upon the Tempter and our first Parents, upon the Seducer and the Seduced; the Serpent, *Adam*, and *Eve*, for the Transgression of the sole Command then given unto Mankind. Here he maketh Inquisition for Blood; in both Cases he proceedeth by Examination, and by Conviction, or Confession: He proceedeth by Enquiry, not in order to his own Information, for he knoweth all Things; he searcheth the Heart and the Reins, and seeth the inmost Secrets of the Soul. *All Things are naked and open unto the Eyes of him with whom we have to do.* The Words of *David* in *Psal. cxxxix.* do most admirably express his most intimate Knowledge and Presence to all our Actions: *O Lord, thou hast searched me out, and known me: Thou knowest my Down-sitting, and Up-rising; thou understandest my Thoughts afar off. Thou compassest my Path, and art about my Bed, and art acquainted with all my Ways: There is not a Word in my Mouth, but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether.*

Cain's Arraignment and Reply. 285

It is not therefore for Want of Knowledge, for he knoweth before he enquireth; but it is to set Mankind a Pattern of Justice, and to prescribe unto them a Method of proceeding in criminal Causes, according to this great Precedent: For we are ignorant, and know nothing: We have no Knowledge of any Thing but what falleth under our own Senses, or the Testimony of others; and therefore we stand in Need of Information, and must proceed according to Evidence. And because of human Error, Prejudice, and Malice, one Witness is not sufficient; but two or three Witnesses are required: And the false Witness, when discovered, was to be put to Death, or suffer such other Penalties as he thought to bring upon the Party accused: Thus, in the Case of Murder particularly, *the Murderer shall be put to Death by the Mouth of Witnesses; but one Witness shall not testify against any Person to cause him to die*, Num. xxxv. 30. *At the Mouth of two Witnesses, or three Witnesses, shall he that is worthy of Death be put to Death*, Deut. xvii. 6. xix. 15. Concerning any false Witness that shall arise, we may see the Law as we read along.

That God maketh Enquiry therefore, and asketh any Questions; that he is pleased to say, as in the Case of Sodom, *I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the Cry of it, which is come up unto me; and if not, I will know*: All this is, of his great

I Grace



## 286 S E R M O N VII.

Grace and Goodness, to justify his Ways to Men, and to teach them with what Certainty and Caution they should proceed in Judgment.

Thus he calleth *Cain* to his Tribunal: He impleads and arraigns him for his Brother's Blood; he puts him upon his Plea by asking, *Where is thy Brother?* whether he be guilty concerning this his Brother, as verily he was: But *Cain* refuseth to plead, he demurreth to the Jurisdiction, and will not join Issue. This bringeth us to his rude irreverent Behaviour: *And he said, I know not: Am I my Brother's Keeper?*

He answereth with a flagrant Lie, and insolently demandeth, *Am I my Brother's Keeper?* He refuseth to plead to his Indictment, and affirmeth, he is not accountable for his Brother, where he is, or what is become of him. He knew too well where he left his Brother, and in what Condition; and to his saucy Question the Answer is, as by the Process it is implied, Yes, thou art thy Brother's Keeper; thou art accountable, if thro' thee any Evil hath befallen him. If he was not his Brother's Keeper, to save and defend him from the Violence of others, he was so far, at least, his Guardian, as not himself to assault and slay him. Every Man is so far entrusted with his Brother; and the Safety of our Lives is founded upon a mutual Trust and Confidence in each other. The Law of Nature is so far from making every Man independent, and not ac-

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countable;

*Cain's Arraignment and Reply.* 287

countable, that it most strictly prohibits all Violence and Wrong; and no Man, except it be given him from above, hath any Power at all against another.

But from what the Law and the Gospel, from the Creation to *Christ*, have since enjoined concerning our Duty towards our Neighbour, we may learn the Obligation Man was originally created under, with Respect to his Brother; for all the subsequent Precepts of the Law and the Gospel are but so many Exemplifications of the Law of Nature imprinted on our Hearts; or, if you please, of the Law of Nature taught and enjoined by the Voice of God: For howsoever plain, and how loud soever Nature may be thought to speak, Man was never left to the Direction of that Voice alone; but we find, that God saw it necessary, as in many other Cases, so particularly in this of our Duty towards our Neighbour, to forbid Hatred and Murder, and to command the several Offices of Love and Good-will.

The general Principle served to convince Men of the Truth and Reasonableness of their Duty, and to convict them in their own Consciences, upon Transgression: Their Duty rose from, as it was founded in the Frame and Constitution of Man, according to the several Relations he stood in; but God, who made Man, gave him also Laws conformable to his Nature, and left him not originally to be a Law unto himself: For how convincing soever the general

## 288 S E R M O N VII.

neral Principle might be, yet by the general Principle alone, or for want of due Pains and Attention, Men were not able to mark out the several Duties ; and therefore God thought fit by Revelations, and afterwards in his holy Word, to apply that general Principle to the several special Duties arising from it. *St. Paul* saith, indeed, that *When the Gentiles which have not the Law, do by Nature the Things contained in the Law; these having not the Law, are a Law unto themselves*, Rom. ii. 14. Where by the Law he meaneth the moral Part of the Law of *Moses* ; but then he does not mean, that they are compleatly or absolutely a Law unto themselves, but imperfectly, and in Part, so many of them as do, and so far as by Nature they do the Things contained in the Law: Otherwise we find, by that black Catalogue of their Sins in the former Chapter, how miserably they had transgressed and perverted the Law of Nature. But God did not originally trust Man to find out his Duty by the meer Exercise of his Reason, but gave him those Things in Command, to do or to forbear, which his Reason and Conscience immediately told him were fit, or not fit to be done.

The express Law against Murder is given to *Noah* presently after the Flood, and, no doubt, there had been a Law given to Mankind before, upon this Murder of *Abel* by his Brother. The Mark set upon *Cain*, whatever it was, at once distinguished and preserved him, as an  
Example

## Cain's Arraignment and Reply. 289

Example of God's Vengeance; and he continued a living Monument and Warning to Mankind against Murder: But upon giving the Law to *Noah*, Man is made answerable for Man, and Blood for Blood. This hath a Place in the *Decalogue*, and is often repeated elsewhere in the Law of *Moses*, and in the Prophets. And moreover, to shew how nearly we are charged with our Brother's Welfare, it is commanded, in the Book of *Leviticus*, xix. 17. *Thou shalt not hate thy Brother in thy Heart; thou shalt in an wise rebuke thy Neighbour, and not suffer Sin upon him.*

But in the Gospel brotherly Love is carried to the greatest Height; it is most earnestly commanded by our Saviour, and enjoined by him to be worn as the Badge of his Disciples: We are to return Good for Evil, and Hatred is made one Species and Degree of Murder. For, as St. *John* teacheth us, instancing in the very Case before us, *This is the Commandment, that we should love one another; not as Cain, who was of that wicked One, and slew his Brother.* Then it followeth, *Whoever hateth his Brother is a Murderer: He is, like Cain, of that wicked One the Devil, 1 John iii. 11, 12, 15.* and he, our blessed Lord assureth us, was a Murderer from the Beginning: The Murderer of *Adam*, and all Mankind, by the Forfeit of Immortality, and Subjection both to temporal and eternal Death; and the Murderer of *Abel*, by this his wicked Instrument, *Cain.*

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This is a full and convincing Answer to that insolent Demand, *Am I my Brother's Keeper?* Darest thou reply thus unto God? This is the Language of a prophane and atheistical Mind, which the Majesty of God could not awe, nor the divine Prefence controul; which could give God the Lie, and affront him to his Face. It is the Fool that saith in his Heart, *there is no God*; but what is he, who seeth him, and talketh with him, and desieth him? It is one Sort of Atheism to deny him; it is another, much stranger, in this Manner to blaspheme him to his Face!

But there is no withstanding the Almighty: Tho' he is merciful, he will not be mocked; no Denial, no Evasion will avail us. If there be no other Witness to our Doings, God is a Witness, and Conscience is a thousand Witnesses, and there need no more at his Tribunal. Men must proceed according to Proof and Allegation, but when God taketh the Matter into his own Hand, he needeth no other Evidence.

We come now, therefore, in the second Place,

II. To the Trial and Conviction of the Criminal: *And he said, What hast thou done? The Voice of thy Brother's Blood crieth unto me from the Ground.*

But here we must adjourn, for the present, the Time will not allow us to enter upon, and



*Cain's Arraignment and Reply.* 291

go thro' the Trial; and therefore, for a Conclusion, I shall only offer a Word or two upon what hath been already said.

1. *First*, From this we may learn the great Goodness of God discovered in his gentle Treatment of this great Offender.

We have seen before, how mildly and with what winning Condescension God expostulated with him, to calm and pacify his troubled Spirit, to appease his Anger, and reconcile him to his Brother: But the Heart of *Cain* was obdurate, and inexorable; he meditates on nothing but Revenge and Blood, and gives no Respite to his cruel Thoughts, till he hath slain his Brother: And now again once more doth God convene him; he takes not immediate Vengeance on him, nor speaks to him in Terms of Anger and Severity, but still proceedeth in the mildest and calmest Manner to bring him to a just Sense and Confession of his Guilt. He seeketh to know the Truth from the Mouth of the Offender, and afterwards, notwithstanding the provoking Answer he gave, still the great God useth him with Tenderness, even while he chargeth him with Blood, and even then, when he passeth Sentence upon him. This is a Pattern for human Judicatories; the Voice of Justice, like the Voice of God, should be free from all Expressions of Wrath and Anger; Justice is equally a Stranger to Passion and Partiality; far from all Railing, Insults, and Reviling: It proceedeth coolly and deliberately,



## 292 S E R M O N VII.

berately, with all Gravity and Solemnity, and the Criminal feeleth the Force of his Conviction, and the Weight of his Sentence, more sensibly, as the whole Proceſs is conducted with Decency and Compaſſion towards him. And here I may congratulate our Country, and our Laws, in the Adminiſtration of Juſtice among us; where the ſtricteſt Regard is ſhewn for the Truth and Evidence of the Cauſe. If there be any Fault, it is, that there ſeemeth ſometimes too great a Lenity in the Proceedings; but this is, indeed, our higheſt Commendation, that the moſt atrocious Criminals, on the moſt flagitious Accuſation, are treated with wonderful Regard, and ſingular Humanity: And as long as Juſtice is fixed and ſteady in her Adminiſtration and Execution of the Laws, all Tenderneſs and Compaſſion to the Criminal is rather to be commended; and the Example is the ſtronger, which raiſes Compaſſion to the Malefactor in the miſt of Indignation at his Crimes; and Juſtice raiſes greater Reverence to her Authority, and then ſhe looketh truly ſevere, when we ſee, that whom ſhe pitieth, yet ſhe will not ſpare.

2. We may learn from hence, the extreme Madneſs and Folly of imagining we can conceal any Thing from God.

God is pleaſed to aſk and examine, not becauſe he wanteth to be informed; but to manifeſt his Juſtice, and to give the Criminal an Opportunity of confeſſing his Guilt, and repenting

### Cain's Arraignment and Reply. 293

menting of his Crimes. Whether *Cain* imagined, that when he was at a Distance from the divine Presence visibly manifested in the Glory of the Cherubim and Seraphin, the constant Attendants on the thrice holy One, he was really out of the Eye and Observation of God, or whether he was better instructed in the divine Omnipresence; nothing can be more rude and insolent, and provoking, than his Answer. Whether he thought the divine Presence was only local, or that God was ignorant, because he asked, he knew that the first Part of his Answer was a Lie, and the other highly insolent, and false likewise, as well as foolish. But God immediately convinceth him that he knew what he had done: If *Cain* be sullen, and refuseth to answer, his Brother's Blood hath a Tongue, and crieth from the Ground to accuse him. When he findeth he is discovered, he hath nothing to reply till after Sentence he taketh Exception to his Doom, and doth either accuse his Judge of Injustice, or himself as unpardonable, as we shall see. And now he is convinced how vain, as well as impious, his Reply is, by which he endeavoureth to conceal, while he denieth his Guilt.

3. *Thirdly*, therefore, let us with all Humility and Contrition confess our Sins, before we are brought to God's Tribunal. Some Sins are of that Nature, that they require a publick Confession; and some of so deep a Die, and cry with so loud a Voice from Earth to Heaven,

that nothing less than an open Confession, or a Trial and Conviction, can put us in any Capacity of Repentance : Such is the Case of Blood, the Voice of which, tho' the Murder be secretly committed, ascendeth to Heaven, and entereth into the Ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. I might add some other Instances, particularly the bearing false Witness, whereby the Property, the Life, or, what is dearer than Life, the good Fame and Reputation of any Man may be taken away : Here can be no Repentance, without a Retraction publick and full, and this without all Regard to the temporal Punishment that may ensue, for that is nothing compared with the eternal ; but this not being directly the Point before us, I have only mentioned it, tho' it comes up to the Case in some Measure ; for false Witness, where it takes away Life, is Murder.

4. In the last Place, let us lay hold of all the Calls and Invitations of God to Repentance, and hearken to the Voice of God, as it speaks to our Consciences. When our own Hearts smite us, and the Sound of Guilt tinglcth in our Ears, we shall then turn to the Lord our God with the deepest Sorrow and Contrition, and fall prostrate before him with the lowest Reverence and Humiliation. Had *Cain* thus hearkened to the Voice of God, and not behaved himself prophanely and insolently to his Maker ; had he readily confessed his Guilt, and earnestly deprecated God's Anger,  
and

## Cain's Arraignment and Reply. 295

and entreated for Pardon, he might have found Mercy at the Hands of God: For God never maketh any Advances, or Offers of his Grace to Man, but he is ready to receive him, if Man, on his Part, will but come forward to meet him. There is no Sin of so deep a Dye, but it may be washed out; of so deadly a Poison, but it may be expelled, and thrown out of the polluted Soul: *For though your Sins be as Scarlet, they shall be as white as Snow; though they be red like Crimson, they shall be as Wool,* Isa. i. 18. And our blessed Lord hath assured us, that *All manner of Sin and Blasphemy,* even Blasphemy against himself, *shall be forgiven unto Men, except only blaspheming against the Holy Ghost,* Mat. xii. 31, 32. Mark iii. 28. Luke xii. 10. So that there is no Sin we can commit against our Saviour, or our Brother, but it may be forgiven. This, however, is not said to encourage us to sin, but to Repentance: He that sinneth is not sure that he shall repent; and he that sinneth upon a Presumption of Forgiveness, addeth a peculiar Provocation to his Sin, to hinder and defeat his Repentance. In Sins of the greater Magnitude, in those of Blood especially, tho' Repentance be possible, it is extremely difficult; sometimes Life must be paid for Life, and Blood for Blood, before he that hath shed Man's Blood can be pardoned: But still it is a great Comfort to miserable Sinners, that upon any Terms,

## 296 S E R M O N VII.

upon any Thing they can do or suffer in this World, they may be forgiven.

But for us, my beloved Brethren, let us watch against the first Risings and Motions of Sin in our Hearts; guard our Souls diligently against the Storms of Anger, and the restless Workings of Hatred and Revenge: And whatever Sins we have committed, let us take Shame unto ourselves, and give Glory unto God; let us beg that our Punishment may be in this World, that we may be spared in the next: Let us mortify our Members, which are upon the Earth *for the Destruction of the Flesh, that our Spirits may be saved in the Day of the Lord Jesus*, 1 Cor. v. 5. remembering what the Apostle also teacheth us, 1 Cor. xi. 31, 32. *For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged; but when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the World.* And after all our Transgressions, all our Sins, and Provocations, let us fly unto the Throne of Grace for Refuge, even unto Jesus the Mediator of the new Covenant, and to the Blood of Sprinkling, which speaketh better Things than the Blood of Abel, Heb. xii. 24. For he is our High-priest, merciful, faithful, and good, Heb. ii. 17. *Who can have Compassion on the Ignorant, and on them that are out of the Way*, Heb. v. 2. *For we have not an High-priest which cannot be touched with the Feeling of our Infirmities; but was in*  
all



*Cain's Arraignment and Reply. 297*

*all Points tempted like as we are, yet without Sin, Heb. iv. 15. For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted, Heb. ii. 18. Let us therefore come boldly unto the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain Mercy, and find Grace to help in Time of Need, Heb. iv. 16. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make Intercession for them, Heb. vii. 25. To him therefore, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, be all Glory and Thanksgiving, all Praise and Adoration, for ever and ever. Amen.*



S E R M O N



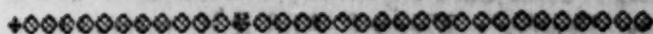
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# SERMON VIII.

The Trial, Conviction, and  
Condemnation, of *Cain*.



GEN. IV. 10, 11, 12.

*And he said, What hast thou done?  
The Voice of thy Brother's Blood cri-  
eth unto me from the Ground.*

*And now art thou cursed from the  
Earth, which hath opened her Mouth  
to receive thy Brother's Blood from  
thy Hand.*

*When thou tillest the Ground, it shall  
not henceforth yield unto thee her  
Strength. A Fugitive and a Vaga-  
bond shalt thou be in the Earth.*



HAVING seen the Arraignment of  
the Criminal, and his rude and ir-  
reverent Behaviour upon God's tak-  
ing Cognizance of the Fact; we  
may pass now, in the second Place, to the  
Trial

## 300 S E R M O N VIII.

Trial and Conviction of the Malefactor: *Ana be said, What hast thou done? The Voice of thy Brother's Blood crieth unto me from the Ground.*

In order to his Conviction God demandeth of him, *What hast thou done?* This again is not an Interrogatory, or Question, for any Information; it is an Answer to Cain's insolent Reply, when the Lord said, *Where is thy Brother?* And Cain answered, *I know not: Am I my Brother's Keeper?* And it is, moreover, a Form of Speech, for the Aggravation of the Crime, to set before his Eyes the Heinousness of it, and the great Wickedness he had committed. The Lord said unto him, *What hast thou done?* I ask not what it is that thou hast done, but what a dreadful Crime, what a crying Sin is this, which thou hast committed? Thou deniest that thou knowest where thy Brother is, but *the Voice of his Blood crieth unto me from the Ground:* Of his Blood, which thou hast shed, I saw thee shed it; his Blood, which thou hast shed, riseth up in Judgment, and beareth Witness against thee. Lo, there he lieth, on the Field where thou wast talking with him; his streaming Wounds proclaim the Violence of his Death, and his Blood bewrayeth the Hand that slew him. Thinkest thou that God knoweth not? Lo, I tell thee, and set before thee, the Things that thou hast done; I bring the Charge against thee; I charge thy Brother's Blood upon thee: The more thou deniest, the louder is the Voice of thy Brother's Blood.

*The Condemnation of Cain.* 301

Blood. Thou pretendest that thou art not accountable for thy Brother; but how comes he thus, how lies he yonder, all weltring in his Gore? What Hand is there but thine to do it? Who, besides thyself, ever shewed any Animosity against him? To all this *Cain* maketh no further Reply; he saw that he stood open, and discovered to his Judge: The Evidence is strong, and inevitable; his Brother's Blood now crieth in his Ears, and his own Conscience of the Deed setteth his Image all pale and ghastly before his Eyes: It followeth and haunteth him wheresoever he goeth; he trembleth, and is dumb, and hath nothing to plead in Denial or Abatement of his Guilt: His Silence and Astonishment do at last confess the Fact. And doubtless, as it was the ancient Notion, and I have accordingly supposed it, that his Brother's Ghost always appeared before him, his Conscience was now awakened and alarmed with all the Terrors of Blood and Death; and he even heard, as it were, the Voice of his Brother's Blood, which sounded in the Ears of God.

It is said, indeed, that our Sins, as well as our Prayers, come up before him; they have both a Voice, and both ascend, as in a Cry, unto him. Thus, *because the Cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their Sin is very grievous, I will go down now, saith the Lord, and see whether they have done altogether according to the Cry of it, which is come unto me,*  
Gen.

## 299 S E R M O N VIII.

Gen. xviii. 20, 21. And for Prayer, thus *David* poureth out his Supplication: *Hearken to the Voice of my Cry, my King, and my God; for unto thee will I pray*, Psal. v. 2. to which Multitudes of the like Expressions may be added: But the Cries of the Poor and of Blood, of Blood especially, are the loudest, and ascend with mighty Force to Heaven. The Cries of the Poor and the Oppressed are said to enter into his Ears, but nothing crieth so loud, and entereth deeper into his Ears, than Blood: It hath not only a Voice itself, but it maketh the Dumb to speak, and Things inanimate to cry out. For in the Cause of Blood, *the Stone shall cry out of the Wall, and the Beam out of the Timber shall answer it*. The Caution *Solomon* giveth against cursing the King, may, with equal Propriety, be applied to Murder. Slay not thy Brother, even in the Depths of Secresy; *for a Bird of the Air shall convey the Voice of his Blood; and that which hath Wings shall declare the Matter*, Eccles. x. 20. The Story is known of the Heathen Soldier who endeavoured to destroy the Swallows chattering in the Chimney; For, said he, *they accuse me of murdering my Father*. Yea, if there were no other Evidence that could possibly rise up against Murderers, we may apply the Words of *David*, as we read them in our old Translation: *Their own Tongues shall make them fall.—And all Men that see it shall say, This hath God done; for they shall perceive that it is his Work*, Psal.



## *The Condemnation of Cain.* 303

lxiv. 8, 9. The Discoveries and Conviction of Murder are observed, by Historians of all Ages and Nations, to have been very strange and wonderful; and when the Murderer hath thought himself most secure, his own Conscience hath forced his own Tongue to accuse him. How was *Cain* surrounded with Witnesses, when he thought no Eye had seen him? And how was he confounded and convicted, when God himself, and the Voice of his Brother's Blood, thus testified against him!

From the Trial and Conviction, I pass now, in the third Place,

III. To the Sentence: *And now thou art cursed from the Earth, which hath opened her Mouth to receive thy Brother's Blood from thy Hand. When thou tillest the Ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her Strength. A Fugitive and a Vagabond shalt thou be in the Earth.*

This Sentence consisteth of three Parts. First,

1. A Curse, and Excommunication from the Presence of God, and the Society of good Men, for the Blood which he had shed: *And now thou art cursed from the Earth, which hath opened her Mouth to receive thy Brother's Blood from thy Hand.*

2. Secondly, A toilsome and miserable Life: *When thou tillest the Ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her Strength.*



## 304 S E R M O N VIII.

3. An unsettled and wandering Condition:  
*A Fugitive and a Vagabond shalt thou be in the Earth.*

1. The first, and most dreadful Part of the Sentence, is the Curse, and Excommunication from the Presence of God, and the Society of good Men, for the Blood which he had shed:  
*And now thou art cursed from the Earth, which hath opened her Mouth to receive thy Brother's Blood from thy Hand.*

This carrieth both a spiritual and a temporal Punishment: He is cursed of God, and driven out from his Presence; he is cursed from the Earth; he is outlawed, and driven from among Men, that is, from all those that enjoy the divine Presence, and worship before him. The Weight of both the spiritual and temporal Infliction, *Cain* was very sensible of, as we shall see; and lamenteth himself in the following Manner, according to the Interpretation I have given to this Part of the Sentence: *Behold thou hast driven me out this Day from the Face of the Earth, and from thy Presence shall I be hid: And I shall be a Fugitive and a Vagabond in the Earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me.* He looketh upon himself to be out of the Protection both of God and Man; he is deprived of all social and civil Rights; every one, that meeteth him, will treat him as a common Enemy, and slay him: He is exposed to the Vengeance of every One that findeth him, like a Man proscribed,  
 with

*The Condemnation of Cain.* 305

with a Price set upon his Head ; and tho' he can die but once, yet he is subject to every Man's Hand, and the first that can master him will slay him. This is his own Sense of the Judgment pronounced upon him, with Reference to the temporal Part especially ; and with Regard to the spiritual, I shall not from that Part of it enlarge, at present, upon the Original and Extent of Excommunication ; only in that Respect we may observe, that from the Creation, all along unto *Noah*, there was a visible Manifestation of the divine Presence in a Display of Light, and an Irradiation of Glory from the Cherubim and Seraphin, which attended the divine Majesty ; and this was called the *Shechinah*. This divine Appearance was fixed at this Time, probably, at the East End of the Garden, from which *Adam* and *Eve*, for their Transgression, had been expelled, to invite their Looks towards the Happiness they had forfeited ; as well as to defend the Entrance, and guard the Passage to the Tree of Life. For, as we read Gen. iii. 24. *He placed at the East End of the Garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming Sword, which turned every Way, to keep the Way of the Tree of Life.* But howsoever this may be, it is certain, from all the Circumstances that we can collect, at this Distance, that *Adam* and his Sons turned their Faces towards the Glory, when they worshipped, where-ever it appeared. From this Presence, and from this Face of God, as it is here

## 306 S E R M O N VIII.

called, *Cain* was driven out, and, consequently, he was driven from the Worship, as well as the Presence of God: He could no longer join with his great Father and his Brethren, nor direct his Eyes to the Point and Object of their Adoration. For altho' God be equally present every-where, yet, as he was pleased to manifest his Presence in some special Place and Manner; towards that Place, and before that Presence, they offered their Sacrifices and Prayers; and from thence issued forth visible Tokens of the divine Acceptance, or Refusal; as in the several Sacrifices of *Cain* and *Abel* we have seen. When *Cain*, therefore, was cursed from the Earth, he was driven out from the divine Presence; he saw no more the Cherubim, and the Glory: And, as it is with good Reason supposed, being thus lost to God, and deprived of the divine Presence, he first set up Idolatry, and directed his Worship to the Sun, as the nearest Resemblance of the divine Glory.

The Words of his Sentence are, *And now thou art cursed from the Earth, which hath opened her Mouth to receive thy Brother's Blood from thy Hand.* This Curse implied his Banishment from that Country, and from those Fields, which he had defiled with his Brother's Blood: The Land, which had drank in his Blood, would not endure, but spewed him out; and he was driven beyond all the Bounds and Circumscriptions of the Land of *Eden*,  
and

*The Condemnation of Cain.* 307

and the Rivers that flowed from it, into a barren and dry Land, where no Water is, as into the desert Part of *Arabia*, as some have conjectured; but it is enough, that whatever Land he should wander in, to him it would be barren and unfruitful. This brings us to the second Part of the Sentence, which consists in the toilsome and miserable Life intailed upon him: *When thou tillest the Ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her Strength.*

2. Upon *Adam's* Transgression the Ground was cursed for his Sake, and in Sorrow was he doomed to eat of it all the Days of his Life; But tho' the Ground, upon this Curse, required, yet still it answered his Labour: Though it brought forth Thorns and Thistles, yet it yielded its Strength also. But here a further Curse is laid upon it, or rather, indeed, upon *Cain*, that he should labour and toil, and the Earth should not yield her Increase: He was a Tiller of the Ground, and the Curse was therefore the more peculiar and pointed to him, that when he tilled the Ground it should not yield unto him her Strength. He had manured it with Blood, and Blood, Man's Blood, is the worst and most unfruitful Tillage in the World: It was but in one Spot, O *Cain*, that the Earth opened her Mouth, and drank in thy Brother's Blood from thy Hand; but by this cursed Libation the whole Earth is defiled, and every Spot, whithersoever thou goest, tho' fruitful to another, shall be barren to thee;

# 308 S E R M O N VIII.

a Curse and a Dearth attend thee, where-soever thou settest thy Foot, and whatsoever thou puttest thine Hand unto. And still this is one of God's Judgments upon the Wicked: *Who turneth the Rivers into a Wilderness, and the Water-springs into dry Ground; a fruitful Land into Barrenness, for the Wickedness of them that dwell therein.* For the Sake of his faithful Servants, *Again,* (just in the Reverse) *he turneth the Wilderness into a standing Water, and the dry Ground into Water-springs; that they may sow their Land, and plant Vineyards to yield them Fruits of Increase,* Psal. cvii. 33, &c.

3. The third Part of his Sentence is an unsettled and wandering Condition: *A Fugitive and a Vagabond shalt thou be in the Earth.*

He was in the Condition of an Outlaw and a Runagate, driven from his Father's Presence, as well as from God's; having no settled Place or Habitation, at least for many Years. It is not to be supposed, that he went out from the Presence of the Lord alone; it is plain, that his Wife went with him, and his Children too, if, as it is probable, he had Children born unto him before that Time. For when after the Birth of *Enoch* he built a City, be the Extent of it never so small, we must suppose, that he had a sufficient Number of Hands, more or fewer, according to the Largeness of the City, and the Time it might be in building. It is certain, that in a few Years after he had a very numerous Progeny, even from the Descendants of



*The Condemnation of Cain.* 309

of *Enoch*; but *Cain* had other Children besides *Enoch*: And, as it is said afterwards of the holy Line, besides those, that are respectively mentioned, it may be said of *Cain* and his Posterity, that *they each of them begat Sons and Daughters.*

When he had thus built a City, we may imagine, that he continued no longer a Fugitive and a Vagabond in the Earth; perhaps not, for the Sentence is indefinite; it is not so expressed as to be absolutely for Life; and yet, if such was his Doom, that a Fugitive and a Vagabond he should be all the Days of his Life, his building a City is no Impeachment of it, or Contradiction to it: For though he built a City, it doth not follow, that he lived and settled in it himself; it was a Place of Rest and Habitation for his Children. This Part of the Sentence needs not be extended to them however; but for himself, he was like the evil Spirit, that goeth up and down seeking Rest, and finding none; no inward Rest, we may be assured: For his Brother's Blood still presented itself in all Horror to his Mind, and those racking Terrors and Tempests in his Breast may most significantly be expressed in the Words of *Isaiab*, lvii. 20, 21. *The Wicked are like the troubled Sea, when it cannot rest, whose Waters cast up Mire and Dirt. There is no Peace, saith my God, to the Wicked.*

Such seemeth to have been *Cain's* Condition, wandering up and down with a fearful and a



# 310 S E R M O N VIII.

doubting Mind, dreading every Noise, and flying from every Shadow, and jealous and suspicious still, that every one that found him should slay him. And such, as it is delivered from ancient Time by *Noah* and his Sons, was his End at last; that he was struck, like a wild Beast with a Dart or Arrow, as he rustled, where he lay concealed in a Bush. We cannot suppose, that so irreligious an Heart as his could have any great Faith in the Assurance God gave him for his Life; his Fears were still greater than his Faith, and his evil Conscience would always fill him with Distrust and Despair; and so long as he apprehended the dreadful Spectre of his Brother's Ghost to follow him, so long would he wander up and down a Fugitive and a Vagabond in the Earth.

It may be asked, perhaps, why God spared his Life, and did not, in this first Instance of Murder, as afterwards he did, require Blood for Blood.

But it may not become us to enquire too curiously into the Reason of God's Proceedings, lest peradventure, when our Reason cannot clear up the Matter, or we apprehend his Doings contrary to our Rules of Reasoning and Judging, we do either rashly deny or condemn the Fact, as if God were obliged to order his Actions according to the Rules bold and blind Men would prescribe unto him.

But here, in the present Case, we may acknowledge, first,

I. That

## *The Condemnation of Cain.* 311

1. That however this were an Offence against the Law of Nature, no penal Sanction having as yet been expressly annexed to that Law, there is not any Necessity in the Reason of the Thing itself, why the Punishment of Blood should in this Instance be Blood.

To which may be added, secondly, this further Consideration:

2. That no Law having been explicitly given in this Point, Man could take no Cognizance of the Fact; which seemeth one Reason why God here taketh the Cause out of Man's Hand into his own, and when he assures to *Cain* his Life, he threateneth so severe a Vengeance upon him that shall slay him: For he will not suffer Man to take away his Life without his Commission.

3. *Thirdly*, We may alledge, that God may punish Offences in what Manner he pleaseth; and tho' he did not in this Instance immediately exact Life for Life, and presently put *Cain* to Death, yet we cannot say that he did not punish, and take full Vengeance of him. He doomed him to a painful miserable Life, full of Anguish, Horror, and Despair, he lived in the midst of Death, in all the Terrors of the Shadow of Death; and surely such a Life is ten thousand Times more dreadful than any present Death can be.

4. And therefore, *Fourthly*, We may presume, that God in his great Wisdom, as well as Justice, and of his great Grace and Goodness

## 312 S E R M O N VIII.

to Mankind, pronounced this Sentence upon *Cain*, to make him, as it were, a living Monument of his Vengeance; a dreadful Example to deter Men from Murder, and from Blood. A wise and good Governor consulteth the Good of his People, and, where he is at Liberty, so orders his Punishments, as may most effectually answer the End proposed, to deter others from the like Crimes and Offences. Had it pleased God presently to have stricken this great Offender dead, the Sense and Horror of his Crime had been soon worn out of the Minds of Men; but the lengthening his Life in this dreadful Manner, for seven hundred Years, perhaps, or more, made the deepest Impressions of the Guilt of Murder; and the Mark which was given to preserve him, indicated at the same Time the Greatness and Dreadfulness of his Crime. But whatever precisely was the Mark, his haggard Eyes, his trembling Limbs, his wild and affrighted Looks, sufficiently pointed out the Murderer; and in the strongest Lines, and deepest Characters, expressed the Greatness and Blackness of his Guilt.

What I have offered may serve for an Answer to those captious Questions which may be moved, and often are, by prophane and presumptuous Men, against God's Proceedings in this extraordinary Case; and therefore I shall chuse to leave upon your Minds such Considerations as are suitable to the Subject before

us,

*The Condemnation of Cain.* 313

us, and fit also to make the most proper and deepest Impressions on us.

1. From hence we may learn, that Blood is of the deepest Dye, deeper and stronger far than any Waters of the Rivers, or all the Seas can fetch out: The Blood of Kings, the Blood of Husbands, and its Correlate, the Blood of Wives; the Blood of Brothers, the Blood of Children, the Blood of Martyrs, are, of all others, of the deepest Colours; and tho' during this Life it may sometimes please God not to bring the Murderers to Justice, still they carry their own Terrors about them; and not receiving their Punishment in this Life, they cannot possibly repent: For in the Guilt of Blood, as I have said, there is no Repentance without open Confession, and Satisfaction to the Law; and therefore they must receive their dreadful Punishment in the next. For, secondly,

2. How secretly soever they have contrived and perpetrated their Murders, whether by Poniard, by Pistol, or by Poison, they rarely escape the Hands of Justice in this World, they never can escape the Vengeance of God in the other. No Acquittal for want of Evidence, or any Defect in Form at an earthly Bar, will acquit them at the Bar of Heaven; and however they may elude the Search of human Tribunals, they can never evade the Tribunal of God, nor by any Means conceal their Guilt, when he maketh Inquisition for Blood.

## 314 S E R M O N VIII.

Blood. Happy are those who repent and confess, or are convicted, and pay Blood for Blood; it is the only Restitution they can make in this World: Those are lost for ever who receive not their Punishment, or at least their Sentence, before they come into the other. All this may serve for so many Documents unto us to beware ourselves of this crying Sin, and to detect and convict it in others, lest we become Accessories to Blood by concealing it.

3. But, above all, from the Horrors of this ugly and dismal Sin, let us learn the Charms and Beauties of brotherly Love, and Christian Charity, as recommended by our blessed Lord, and his beloved Disciple, in the most earnest and endearing Manner, John xiii. 34, 35. *A new Commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all Men know that ye are my Disciples, if ye have Love one to another.* The same Commandment he repeats in Chap. xv. twice, enforcing it with this endearing Consideration: *Greater Love hath no Man than this, that he lay down his Life for his Friends.* And the beloved Disciple still re-inforceth it, and applieth it to us all: *Hereby perceive we the Love of God, because he laid down his Life for us; and we ought to lay down our Lives for the Brethren,* 1 John iii. 16. *Beloved, let us love one another, for Love is of God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is Love. Herein is Love, not that we loved God,*  
but



## *The Condemnation of Cain.* 315

*but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the Propitiation for our Sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another, 1 John iv. 7, 8, 10.*

At this Time, especially, when we are about to celebrate the Remembrance of his Love in thus dying for us by partaking of these sacred Memorials of it, let us call up and kindle all the Sparks of brotherly Affection in our Souls: Let us approach to the holy Table with Faith and Humility, and manifest our Love to *Christ* by our Love to the Brethren. And so, after we have practised this divine Grace of brotherly Love and Charity upon Earth, may we all meet joyfully together, and be received into his everlasting Kingdom of Charity and of Glory by *Jesus Christ* the Righteous, who is *the Propitiation for our Sins*, our Redeemer, our Judge, and Saviour. To whom, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, be ascribed all Glory for ever.  
*Amen.*



SERMON



THE CONFESSION OF FAITH  
SERMON

At this time, when we are about  
to receive the Sacrament of the Lord's  
Supper, let us first of all examine  
ourselves, that we may be worthy  
to partake of it. For as the  
Apostle says, "Whoever shall eat  
and drink of this Bread and Cup  
unworthily, he shall be guilty of  
the Body and Blood of the Lord."  
Therefore, let us consider our  
hearts, and see if we have any  
sin that hinders us from  
receiving the Lord's Supper  
worthily. For if we have, let  
us confess our sins to God, and  
to one another, and let us  
seek forgiveness. For the Lord  
is merciful and gracious, and  
will forgive our sins, if we  
repent of them. And let us  
remember, that the Lord's Supper  
is a holy thing, and that we  
ought to receive it with  
reverence and awe. For it is  
the Body and Blood of our  
Saviour, Jesus Christ, who  
gave himself for us, that he  
might redeem us from all  
iniquity, and purify unto  
himself a peculiar people, zealous  
of good works. Therefore, let  
us receive the Lord's Supper  
with thanksgiving, and with  
a pure conscience, and with  
a faithful heart, remembering  
the precious death of Christ,  
for our redemption, and for the  
forgiveness of our sins.



## S E R M O N IX.

*Cain's Exceptions to the Sentence passed upon him.*



GEN. iv. 13, 14.

*And Cain said unto the Lord, My Punishment is greater than I can bear.*

*Behold, thou hast driven me out this Day from the Face of the Earth: And from thy Face shall I be hid, and I shall be a Fugitive and a Vagabond in the Earth, and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me.*



WE have seen, in the former Verses, the Arraignment, the Trial, and Condemnation of the Criminal: We proceed next to the Execution of the Sentence. *Cain* had nothing to plead  
why

# 318 SERMON IX.

why Sentence should not be passed upon him; and tho' he could offer nothing in Arrest of Judgment, he moveth in Arrest of Execution; He excepteth to the Sentence itself, and pleadeth for a Mitigation of it; and surely nothing but infinite Goodness, nothing but the Patience and Long-suffering of God, could suffer him to proceed in this Manner. To complain of his Sentence, was to charge God with Injustice; and to object the Danger to which his Life was exposed, was not to acknowledge, that it was most justly forfeited.

For our better Improvement and Edification, I will consider this Passage more distinctly, as it containeth, first,

I. *Cain's Plea: My Punishment is greater than I can bear. Behold, thou hast driven me out this Day from the Face of the Earth; And from thy Face shall I be hid, and I shall be a Fugitive and a Vagabond in the Earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me.*

II. *Secondly, God's Reply: And the Lord said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, Vengeance shall be taken on him seven-fold. And the Lord set a Mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him. Thirdly,*

III. *The Execution of the Sentence: And Cain went out from the Presence of the Lord.*

I. In

I. In this Passage we have, in the first Place, Cain's Plea.

This consisteth of several Parts, which we will take in Order.

1. And the first Part of it is this:

*My Punishment is greater than I can bear.*

This Plea might, in some Measure, be admitted, did it proceed from a true penitent Heart, and a godly Sorrow for the Murder he had committed, and for all the Evils he had done; but his Sorrow and Concern were not for what he had done, but for what he should suffer: It was that Sorrow of the World which worketh Death. He says not one Word of his Sin, especially the great and crying Sin he had committed: He remonstrates against the Greatness of his Punishment, as if it were too rigorous, and likewise unjust: His Plea is a fresh Provocation, a new Insult, and Affront upon his Maker. Admit the Truth of his Allegation, were the Punishment greater than he could bear, it was not greater than he deserved. And here we may observe the Inequality and Difference of his Behaviour upon this Occasion. While he imagined his Crime was not known, and foolishly flattered himself, that because it was hidden from Men, it was hidden from God also; he answered rudely, and insolently, when God asked him, *Where is thy Brother? I know not: Am I my Brother's Keeper?* But no sooner was he convicted, and had received

## 320 S E R M O N IX.

ceived Sentence, but he sinketh into Despondency and Despair, his proud Heart is quailed and amated at the Prospect of his Punishment; he betrays a poor and dejected Spirit; as every proud Spirit is base and mean, when it is tried; and he that is cruel, is found, at the same Time, to be cowardly too: He that without Remorse, and notwithstanding the divine Expostulation, could shed his Brother's Blood, now shrinketh and trembleth at his own Punishment; and tho' it were far less than he deserved, yet he frowardly complaineth, that *it is greater than he can bear.*

This is his general Remonstrance; we will consider next,

2. In the second Place, how he supporteth it, or in what Respects he pretends *his Punishment is greater than he can bear.*

He instanceth in four Points, as if he would make good his Remonstrance by an Induction of Particulars.

1. The first is, his being driven out from the Society of Men.

2. The second is, his being deprived of the Presence of God.

3. The third is, he is doomed to be *a Fugitive and a Vagabond.*

4. Fourthly, His Life is exposed to *every one that shall find him.*

1. *First*, He alledgeth, that he is driven out from the Society of Men: *Behold, thou hast driven me out this Day from the Face of the Earth.*

Not

Not that he was driven from the Earth, but only from his Father's Habitation; from all that Part of the Earth where his Father and his Brethren dwelt: In Respect of this, all the rest of the World was no other than a Wilderness, and a Desert; and he was banished from the Society of his Fellow Creatures, into the vast Solitude of an empty and unpeopled World. He had none, that we read of, but his Wife, whose Affection made her the Companion of his Exile, tho' she was not the Partner of his Crime; and if, before this, any Children were born unto him, they were also Partakers of his Banishment: For howsoever he might be accompanied by his Wife, and those of his own Household, he was cut off from all the rest of Mankind; and (in the Language of the Psalmist) he might truly say, *I am become a Stranger unto my Brethren, even an Alien unto my Mother's Children*, Psal. lxxix.

8. In After-times we find, that the Crime of one was avenged on the whole Family; and God adjudged, in some Cases, that the Children should bear the Iniquity, and the Punishment also, of their Fathers. And so it was in this present Case; whosoever accompanied *Cain*, must accompany him in this Part of his Punishment; and the Children, which were afterwards born unto him, were born unto that State and Condition which their Father, in this Respect, was condemned unto. Blood is a deadly and contagious Sin; and *Cain*, by shedding



# 322 S E R M O N IX.

ding his Brother's Blood, had tainted his own; and his Children, by unavoidable Necessity, were the Children of a Murderer. So far as he was driven from the Face of the Earth, so far were they driven also; and as it was one Part of the Curse upon him, that the Earth should be barren and unfruitful, and not yield unto him her Strength for his Toil; this Part of the Curse, so long as he lived, affected his Children also: The Earth was unfruitful to them, as well as to him; where-ever he set his Foot, where-ever he went, he carried Barrenness and Dearth along with him.

In this Respect he might truly say, *My Punishment is greater than I can bear.* To entail Misery and Ruin upon a Family, to involve his Children in his Curse, is a Grief and Affliction which might well cut and pierce him to the Heart. Many Fathers have been grieved for the Attaint and Forfeitures they have brought upon their Family, more than for themselves; this hath been more grievous and afflicting to them than the Death and Execution, even than the Tortures they were to undergo.

But we do not find that this, how natural soever, was any Part of *Cain's* Consideration; he speaketh nothing of his Wife and Posterity; his Care and Concern seem to have been for himself alone: He was a selfish and worldly-minded Man, without brotherly Love, and possibly

possibly without all other natural Affection too; for he that could shed his Brother's Blood, had no very great Sense, we may think, of the Sufferings of his Children. This indeed would have afforded some Countenance, and given some Colour to his Plea, had he thus urged and pleaded in their Behalf.

For myself, I own, that thy Judgments, O Lord, are right; I have deserved the utmost of thy Wrath and Indignation; but my Wife, my Children, poor Sheep! what have they done? To see them involved in the Curse of my Guilt, is more grievous than all my other Sufferings to my Soul: To behold their Miseries, brought upon them by my Sin, Oh! I cannot endure it: This, *my Punishment, is greater than I can bear!*

2. The second Particular is, his being deprived of the Presence of God: *And from thy Face shall I be hid.*

This, to a devout and pious Soul, had been the most afflicting Punishment; and it might seem, that *Cain* was deeply affected with it, when he recounts this Part of the Curse, or Sentence pronounced upon him: But if we consider how little he valued the Blessing of the divine Presence, while he enjoyed it, how prophanelly and irreverently he behaved himself towards God; we cannot suppose that he laid this Part of the Sentence to Heart out of

## 324 S E R M O N IX.

any true Sense of Piety and Devotion. It is true, we do not sometimes understand the Value of a Blessing till we have lost, or are in Danger of losing it: And *Cain*, when he was cursed from the Earth, might begin to apprehend the Blessings he should be deprived of by being driven from the Presence of God. But if we look into the Temper and Disposition of the Man, it should seem that he regretted the Loss of God's Presence only as it affected his temporal Estate, as the Want of God's Blessing and Protection exposed him to Misery and Danger. He might be sensible of the divine Favour, tho' he was regardless of his Duty; and imagine, that being removed from his Presence, removed him from his Protection too: This he expresses, when he apprehendeth that every one will slay him; and he seemeth to have a quicker Sense of the Miseries to which he should be exposed, when thus banished from the Presence of God, than of the Blessings that were derived from the Enjoyment of it.

He did not imagine, especially since the Detection of the Murder convinced him, that all such Imaginations were vain; he imagined not, that he should be so hid, as that God should not see him; that he should be so concealed, that the Eye of God should not find him; this is rather the Wish and Desire of ungodly Men, what they endeavour to argue and persuade

suade themselves into: With Respect to a future State they are Infidels, and as they go on in the Way of *Cain*, we may conclude they go upon his Principles also. All his Views seem to have been terminated in this Life, and he seems to have regarded the divine Presence no further than he thought it conducive to his worldly Felicity; worshipping God on no better Motive than he afterwards worshipped the Sun for the Comfort and Benefits of his Light. The Sense which he, and those that follow him, have of God and Eternity, is well expressed in the second Chapter of the Book of *Wisdom*, Part of which I shall recite: *For the Ungodly said, reasoning with themselves, but not aright, Our Life is short and tedious, and in the Death of a Man there is no Remedy; neither was there any Man known to have returned from the Grave. For we are born at all Adventures, and we shall be hereafter as though we had never been: For the Breath in our Nostrils is as Smoke, and a little Spark in the moving of our Heart, which being extinguished, our Body shall be turned into Ashes, and our Spirit shall vanish as the soft Air; with much more to the same Purpose. This impious and false Reasoning is as old as any Monuments of Time; it prevailed and over-run the World before the Flood, and it was soon revived and propagated among wicked Men after the Flood. Job describeth them*

## 326 S E R M O N IX.

as an impious and godless Crew, *which say unto God, Depart from us, for we desire not the Knowledge of thy Ways,* Job xxi. 14. And in the next Chapter *Eliphaz* runneth them up to their first Original, even unto *Cain*, and those that walked in his Way, and vainly fancied they were hid from the Eyes of God: *Hast thou marked the old Way which wicked Men have trodden? Which were cut down out of Time, whose Foundation was overflowed with a Flood; which said unto God, Depart from us,* Job xxii. 15, &c.

*Cain* indeed had been used and accustomed to the divine Presence, and therefore he himself could not question, nor deny it; but the divine Presence had no Influence on his evil Heart, and he regretted not the Loss of it any further than his Removal from it was his Banishment; and being deprived of it, he was deprived also of his temporal Felicity. If we would seek the Difference between a worldly and a gracious Heart, we may find it in the Book of *Psalms*, and observe with what different Sentiments, with what Grief of Mind, and Anguish of Heart, and Streams of Sorrow, holy *David* lamenteth his being deprived of, and shut out from the divine Presence, only for a Season: For when he was persecuted up and down by *Saul*, and especially when he was forced to leave *Jerusalem* for *Ab-salom*, we may read in what mournful Strains he lamenteth and bemoaneth his being deprived



prived of seeing the Place of the divine Presence, and debarred from the Service of the Sanctuary. His Restoration to the Tabernacle he prayeth for more earnestly, than for his Restoration to his Throne; and preferreth the meanest Station in the House of God to the greatest Splendor in the Tents of Ungodliness. See *Psal.* xvii, xlii, xliii, lxxxiv. This is the Language, and these the Strains of a godly and a gracious Heart, which dreadeth no Judgment so sore as to be deprived of, and desireth no Blessing more earnestly than to be admitted to the Presence of God. And when he would ask Pardon and Forgiveness, that himself may not be hid from the Presence of God, and that God may not hide his Face from him, he prayeth: *Hide thy Face from my Sins, and blot out all mine Iniquities; cast me not away from thy Presence, and take not thine holy Spirit from me,* *Psal.* li. 9, 11.

This then is the Difference between a worldly and a godly Sorrow, between a prophane and a gracious Spirit; one hath the tenderest Sense of its Sins, and is deeply affected with the Fear and the Love of God; the other hath no Feeling of Sin but in the Punishment, and is void of the true Love and Fear of God. Such was the Temper of *Cain's* Heart; he was terrified at the Punishment, but not grieved for his Sins.



## 328 S E R M O N IX.

And so he goes on to the third Particular, which he brings as a further Aggravation of his Punishment.

3. *And I shall be a Fugitive and a Vagabond in the Earth.*

This Part of the Sentence I have spoken to already, and there is little more to be added; only we may observe, that this to *Cain* was one of the most sensible and unsupportable Parts of his Punishment. To be *a Fugitive and a Vagabond*, in an unpeopled and solitary World, and to carry the Curse with him whithersoever he went; to see every Spot of Ground he came to wither, and grow barren before him, as if it sickened at his Touch, and was blasted with his Breath, this might convince him of the deadly Poison and Contagion of Sin: But he reflects not upon his Sin, but here likewise upon his Punishment only. He was driven from his Father's Tents, from all Intercourse and Society, both sacred and civil, with all his Brethren; he was excommunicated and outlawed, and whether or no his troubled Mind, ever full of Anguish and Horror at the Thoughts of his Brother's Blood, would suffer him not to settle long in any Place, the very Curse that attended his Tillage, would force him continually to change his Habitation; and the Barrenness of the Ground, as soon as he came upon it, would oblige him, without making any Settlement, to be constantly, as it were,

were, removing from Place to Place: And tho' he afterwards built a City, however it might be a Place of Refuge and Rest, and Security to his Children; it could neither give Ease to his troubled Mind, nor take off the Curse, and make the Ground fruitful about it.

There is another Sense in which these Words, according to the *Septuagint*, are interpreted; instead of *a Fugitive and a Vagabond*, they render *sighing deeply, and trembling*; sighing from the Compression, and trembling from the Astonishment of his Heart: And, no doubt, such was his doleful Condition. But he was, nevertheless, *a Fugitive and a Vagabond in the Earth*; and while he wandered about he sighed, and while he fled he trembled. This was an Infliction by the immediate Hand of God, a natural Effect of his Remorse and his Guilt, but heightened still, and impressed more strongly by the divine Terrors on his Mind and Limbs; he went sighing, and groaning, and trembling, all the Days of his Life: His Heart was filled with Astonishment and Dread, and his Body was struck with the Palsy; the Mark, perhaps, as we shall see, which God was pleased to set upon him. This leads us to,

4. The fourth Thing he urgeth, as the last and greatest Aggravation of his Punishment: *And it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me.*

His

## 330 S E R M O N IX.

His Life was like to be so miserable, that it may seem strange he should be so solicitous about it: Death, compared with such a Life, was a Blessing; and if nothing worse was to ensue, he that slew him should work him a Deliverance. Had *Cain* feared Death upon the Prospect of Judgment and Condemnation in the World to come, it had been a pious and a godly Fear, to awaken him to Repentance, to set him earnestly to sue for Pardon, to seek the Face of God; from which he was hid, and from whose Presence he was driven: But *Cain* feared Death only as he apprehended it a further Punishment, and as the Period of his Existence. He had seen it in the most ghastly Figure, as it was drawn by his cruel Hand, and sat on his Brother's Face, all gaping with Wounds, and streaming with Blood: *Adam's* Sin first introduced Death, but *Cain's* murderous Hand first shewed him to the World. And as it was in this Manner that Death first seized upon his Prey, *Cain* had no other Idea of it than from this frightful one of his own drawing. He might perhaps imagine there was no other Way of dying, at least he might conclude that it was not fit he should die any other Way: He might well look upon his Life as forfeited, and be apprehensive that every one that should find him would slay him; a guilty Fear anticipateth its Punishment, and strongly apprehends the Vengeance it deserves. The Criminal, like *Cain*, endeavours to fly  
from

from it, but it pursueth his Steps, and follows him at the Heels, and seemeth every Moment ready to take hold of him; this Apprehension is still more uneasy and tormenting to evil Men, as they have set up their Rest, and desire their Portion of good Things in this World: And here, to outward Appearance, they receive them; but however this pleasurable Scene may seem to make Life desirable, yet we know not what Anguish of Spirit, what Checks of Conscience, what Forebodings of Judgment, may cloud their Mind, and embitter their Feasts, and turn all their Mirth and Musick into jarring and discordant Sounds. But if a wicked Man, together with his Guilt, be also miserable, with Regard to the Enjoyments of the present Life; if, like *Cain*, he is a *Fugitive and a Vagabond*, and under continual Apprehensions that Vengeance is just seizing upon him, how miserable indeed must such a Wretche's Condition be! And what is there in such a State so inviting, as to make Life desirable? But impious and wicked Men, who either do not believe that there is any Life after this, or apprehend what must be their Portion if there be, look upon this Life, if there be no other, as their All; and if there be, still they esteem this Life as the best Portion of their Existence: In one Case they prefer Misery to Non-existence, and had rather lengthen out a wretched Life, than for ever cease to be; in the other Case they conclude,  
more

## 332 S E R M O N IX.

more justly, that a Life, tho' miserable, is to be preferred to a State far more miserable, both in Duration and Degree.

Either of these Presumptions may account for *Cain's* Desire of Life, and Fear of Death; but, at the same Time, upon either Supposition we may learn what Wretches they must be indeed, who after Death have either no Prospect at all, or a most miserable Expectation! The first of these is the mighty Comfort, the wretched Hope of those free and exalted Spirits who have themselves shaken off the Yoke of Religion, and would deliver others from the same Yoke of Bondage, whose only Fear it is, that they should prove immortal; and whose only Hope, that they shall die like Dogs.

But unless they could be assured, that notwithstanding all the Privileges and Pre-eminence Mankind enjoy above the brute Creation, they should, in the End, be altogether like the Beasts that perish; they should attend, a little surely, to the bare Possibility of living longer than they desire, lest what they call dying here, should be no more than an Opening into another World, and a transmitting of them to another State of Existence where their Lot will be miserable for ever.

This World, taken with all its Cares and Afflictions, is hardly worth a wise Man's Consideration, without a Recompence and a Remedy, without the Prospect of an happy End  
and



and Conclusion: A good Man, out of such a Prospect, beareth all the Miseries of this Life with Comfort; and if they befall him for Conscience-sake, with Joy: Evil Men only do truly feel them, and, like *Cain*, desire to drag on a miserable Life, because they either affect to believe no other, or not a better; or if any, they doubt and expect that a worse and more miserable State awaiteth them.

From hence we may learn the true Estimate of Life, that it is a Course of Improvement in a continual Progression to that Happiness our Nature is capable of. This is the good Christian's Progress; and because there is no such Thing as perfect Happiness in this World, he looketh for it, and directs all his Thoughts and Actions towards it in the next. This Life he considereth as a State of Trial and Probation, and in that View he looks upon all the Miseries and Afflictions of it as so many Steps to his future Happiness: In them, as in a Furnace, he exalteth and purifieth his Mind; he separateth from his Soul all the Dross and earthy Particles that hang about it and press it down, and prepareth and dresseth it with every Grace and Virtue, all pure and defecate, for its Flight to Heaven.

But, on the other Hand, wicked and worldly-minded Men, tho' they can never attain to perfect Happiness in this Life, yet as they do not expect it in another, are willing and desirous still to lengthen and draw out the

Time,



## 334 S E R M O N IX.

Time, tho' they spend their Days in Vanity, and their Years in Trouble. However they may pretend to hope for Annihilation hereafter, here they think it better to be miserable, than not to be: As they have no Hopes of a better Life, they are for making the most of this. Thus *Cain*, while he complaineth of his Punishment, that *it is greater than he can bear*, is yet desirous to bear it; and one Part of his Fear is, that any Body should deliver him out of it: Altho' his Life be so very miserable, yet he feareth, lest *every one that findeth him, should kill him*.

I should proceed to the remaining Part, concerning the Assurance God is pleased to give him of his Life, and the Mark he set upon him, and so to the Execution of the Sentence, where it is said, *Cain went out from the Presence of the Lord*; but these will furnish out another Discourse: And therefore I shall conclude at present with a short Inference or two from what hath been already said, by way of Instruction and Exhortation suitable thereunto.

1. It is behoofful then, in the first Place, that we look upon this Life as a Passage and Introduction to another; and since no true Happiness, unmixed and sincere, is to be found in this World, it will be our highest Wisdom, as it is our nearest Concern, that we seek it there only where true Joys are to be found. The more our Life is spiritualized and refined,  
the

the more we endeavour to raise our Minds to an heavenly Frame and Temper: We do not only prepare ourselves for true and everlasting Happiness, but we do really anticipate and enjoy a Specimen, an Earnest, and Portion of it here; for that Happiness in this Life is the truest, which doth most nearly resemble the Happiness of the other. Secondly,

2. Since our Punishment for our Sins in this World, may, in the common Way of speaking, be greater than we can bear; we shall do most wisely to reflect on the Punishment that awaiteth impenitent Sinners in the other: If we complain of our Punishment as intolerable here, how shall we be able to endure it for ever hereafter?

3. *Thirdly*, therefore, Let us take Warning by *Cain*, and make our Submission for, and Confession of our Sins, in Time: Sin, and the Punishment of it, being often used promiscuously, as I have observed, for each other; some, instead of reading, *My Punishment is greater than I can bear*; have read, *My Sin is greater than can be forgiven* [me], or remitted: And in this Construction they are a deep and passionate Acknowledgment of the Greatness of his Transgression. But the Confession comes too late; he was now convicted, and Judgment was passed upon him: When he was first examined he should have confessed, but then he stood upon the Denial of his Guilt; nor would he acknowledge it, till it was

## 336 S E R M O N IX.

was proved upon him: And however this Confession at last may seem to carry an Appearance of true Sorrow and Remorse, it is rather an Expression of his Despair, than Repentance; a vain and fruitless Sorrow. Our Time of Repentance is before we come to Judgment; when Sentence is past, it will be too late, and then by our Confession we shall only express our Despair: For after Judgment there is no Remission, the Sentence is fixed, and the Doom irrevocable.

4. *Lastly*, Since *Cain* is fond of Life, tho' he complains of the Punishment, and is more afraid of being slain, than of being miserable; let us learn what a dreadful Thought it is, how much against human Nature, to be utterly destroyed, and to be as tho' we had never been: This is the glorious Hope and Refuge of Infidels and Libertines, the Wit and Wisdom of those Fools who have said in their Heart, *there is no God.*

And if we cannot bring ourselves to the Thoughts of an utter Dissolution; if Nature shrinketh and recoileth against the Prospect of everlasting Misery, O let it be our Wisdom and our Pride to believe in God, to accept that Redemption which the Gospel offereth, and so to serve God in this World, as to be for ever happy in the other: That after all the Changes and Chances, the Miseries and Afflictions, of this mortal Life, we may, like good and faithful Servants, enter into the Joy of our Lord,

Lord, into those unchangeable and ever-during Mansions of Rest, of Happiness, and Glory, which our Lord hath prepared for us, and into which, of his infinite Love, he will receive us. And therefore unto him, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, be Glory for ever.

*Amen.*



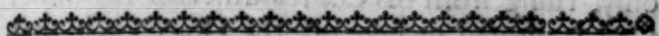
Lord into those unchangeable and ever-during  
 Mansions of Rest, of Happiness, and Glory,  
 which our Lord hath prepared for us, and  
 into which, of his infinite Love, he will re-  
 ceive us. And therefore unite him with the  
 Father and the Holy Spirit, be Glorified for ever.  
 Amen.

28 SE60



## S E R M O N X.

God's Reply to *Cain*; the Mark  
set upon him, and the Exe-  
cution of the Sentence.



GEN. iv. 15, 16.

*And the Lord said unto Cain, There-  
fore whosoever slayeth Cain, Ven-  
geance shall be taken on him seven-  
fold. And the Lord set a Mark upon  
Cain, lest any finding him should  
kill him.*

*And Cain went out from the Presence  
of the Lord.*

 E are now almost arrived to the  
End of this great Transaction, the  
Execution of the Sentence: We  
have seen the Remonstrance of *Cain*  
upon his Condemnation, and in the next Verse



# 340 S E R M O N X.

we have the Reply his Judge is pleased to make unto it.

No Notice at all is taken of the Exceptions, which *Cain* had made to the Greatness of his Punishment in general, or to any Part of the Sentence in particular; the Sentence is righteous and just, and his Judge will not suffer him to dispute it: But as to the Apprehension he was under, that every one that found him would slay him, that being no Part of his Doom, but the Suggestion of his own Fears only, rising from his Consciousness of his Guilt; God is pleased to take off the Objection in that Point, and to assure him of the contrary: And the Answer is to this Effect; ‘ It is not so, as  
 ‘ thou dost apprehend, my Intention is not to  
 ‘ put a present End to thy Life; thou thyself  
 ‘ shalt undergo a sevenfold Vengeance for  
 ‘ shedding thy Brother’s Blood; And he that  
 ‘ slayeth thee shall bear the Vengeance that is  
 ‘ due unto thee; Vengeance shall be taken on  
 ‘ him sevenfold. And that no Man may fall  
 ‘ upon thee, when he findeth thee a Fugitive  
 ‘ and a Vagabond in the Earth, I do moreover  
 ‘ set a Mark upon thee, lest any finding thee,  
 ‘ should kill thee.’

Besides the Vengeance threatened, there was therefore some Mark or Token set upon him, to distinguish him from other Men, and to shew that he was under the immediate Vengeance of God; a Man devoted and accursed, in whose Punishment no Man should presume

*The Execution of the Sentence.* 341

to interfere by cutting him off, and shortening the appointed Date of his Sufferings.

This Enlargement comprehends, I think, the full Sense of these Words, as they have been variously expounded, and understood by several Commentators, and by some of the Fathers also.

I shall therefore form the remaining Part of this Discourse upon this Paraphrase, shewing upon what Authority every Part of it is grounded, and by what Rules of Construction it is supported. Proceeding therefore upon this Plan, I shall lay before you, first,

I. The Correction of *Cain's* Mistake in the Apprehension he was under, lest every one, that found him, should slay him. Secondly,

II. What relateth to the Vengeance here denounced upon the Man, that should slay him. Thirdly,

III. What we may understand by the Mark which, it is here said, the Lord set upon him.

I. We will consider the Correction of *Cain's* Mistake in the Apprehension he was under, that every one, who found him, would slay him.

The Word, which we translate [*therefore*] is rendered in the *Greek* [*Not so*]; and when written with an affirmative Note joined to it,

## 342 S E R M O N X.

it may be rendered [*assuredly,*] [*most certainly,*] Passing by, therefore, the smaller Criticisms, both Senses, the affirmative and the negative, may very consistently be taken in, and the Truth and full Force of the Original may be expressed in this Manner, [*Verily, not so;*] it is not as thou dost apprehend: God will assure him against those Fears. Therefore, to prevent any Attempts upon his Life, and to deter every Man from killing him, *Whosoever slayeth Cain, Vengeance shall be taken on him seven-fold.*

I have stated this Point in Part, when I answered the Objection why God did not require Blood for Blood, and immediately take away his Life.

Is *Cain* afraid, that every one, who findeth him, will kill him? His Fears are vain; God intends him not so great a Favour; a seven-fold Vengeance is denounced against him, and the Continuance of his Life is one of the foremost Parts of his Punishment. God intended him for a visible Monument, and a living Example of his Avengement upon Murder; and therefore this Assurance of his Life is so far from a Mitigation, that it is the greatest Aggravation of his Doom. Death is the Period of all human Misery, as well as of all human Glory: All the Sufferings of this present World terminate with our Lives, and Death bringeth at least this Comfort with it, that in putting an End to our Lives, it putteth an End to our Miseries

*The Execution of the Sentence,* 343

Miseries also. *Cain*, wretched and miserable as he was, was yet desirous of Life, and afraid of Death; but his Fears are needless; Death is a Deliverance he must not expect, till the Measure of his Vengeance for his Brother's Blood is fulfilled. His Brother's Blood crieth from the Ground for Vengeance, and *Abel* being dead, yet speaketh; he speaketh even by the Mouth of *Cain*: And *Cain*, who was of that wicked one, and slew his Brother, he who denied his Guilt when he was first examined, is forced now to proclaim it. He is a *Fugitive and a Vagabond in the Earth*, and carrieth about this Doctrine against Murder with him among all his Posterity; he teacheth his Children that are yet unborn, even unto the seventh Generation, to beware of Murder: He preacheth not by Word, but in very Deed, in the strongest Terms, and the most dreadful Sounds; in the Sighs he venteth, and in the Groans he uttereth: He is himself the first, and most dreadful Example of the Doctrine against Murder; and his Punishment a clear and perpetual Comment on the Text.

It is the Wisdom of human Laws to make a Distinction of Punishments, in some measure, correspondent and proportionate to the Crime; but as Death is esteemed the greatest Punishment for the greatest Crime, and can only differ in the Kind and Manner of the Execution, therefore, in some signal Instances of the most flagrant and atrocious Villanies

## 344 S E R M O N X.

human Laws have lengthened the Execution by gradual Approaches, in some exquisite Tortures, till the last Stab, and the finishing Stroke, is accounted the kindest Blow, which putteth an End at once both to the Life and Sufferings of the Criminal. But these Executions, however sharp, are comparatively short; and therefore human Laws have further contrived to extend the Example beyond the Life of the Offender, and to hang up and expose the Carcass till it rotteth, and falleth away from the Gibbet or the Pole. This is the most that human Laws and human Power can do; and this, it is to be presumed, hath so good Effect, as to make the Example more dreadful, as well as durable, to all them that pass by the Way. But of how much greater Force and Extent must the Example of this great Malefactor be, thus marked, and condemned for a Wretch and a Murderer; wandering up and down, sighing and wailing, and trembling, to the continual Dread and Amazement of his Children!

He was not, as Criminals ever since have been, cast into Prison, or confined in a Dungeon: No, his Punishment was, to go at large, *a Fugitive and a Vagabond in the Earth*; a Fugitive, to fly when no Man pursueth; and a Runagate, to continue in Scarceness. The whole Earth was his Prison, and his Business was, like that of his Master, to go to and fro in the Earth, and to walk up and down in it.

Thus



*The Execution of the Sentence.* 345

Thus he flieth, and thus he wandereth, impelled by Guilt, and terrified by the bloody Spectre of his Brother's Ghost, which still pursueth him whithersoever he goeth. Like a wounded Deer, the deadly Shaft cleaveth to his Flesh, and hangeth in his Side; and the subtil Arrows of God's Vengeance drink up his Spirits, and yet he doth not die: Like a blasted Oak, or a singed Cedar, it is plainly seen, that he is touched from Heaven, and that he mourneth and trembleth under the avenging Hand of God: So far from killing him, that every one flieth from him that findeth him. This is the Murderer, this is the cruel Man, this is the wicked Wretch, that slew his Brother! The Vengeance is God's; it is God that taketh Vengeance on him, and we dare not take it out of his Hands: For God hath declared, and *Cain* hath proclaimed it to us, that *Whosoever slayeth Cain, Vengeance shall be taken on him seven-fold.*

This leads us to consider, secondly,

II. What relateth to the Vengeance here denounced upon the Man that should slay him: *Vengeance shall be taken on him seven-fold.*

Some expound these Words in an indefinite Sense, that a great and severe Vengeance shall be taken; some find a latent and mystical Meaning in them: As seven is used and distinguished by God himself, in many Instances, as a sacred Number. Some explain them from the



## 346 S E R M O N X.

the Words of *Lamech*, who enforceth his Argument by the Rule of Proportion: *If Cain shall be avenged seven-fold, truly Lamech seventy and seven-fold.* But all that can be built on this is only conjectural, as to any strict Computation of the Numbers: Our blessed Lord, we find, extendeth our Forgiveness as far as *Lamech* doth his Vengeance, till seventy Times seven; that is, we are to forgive our Brother, tho' he offend us never so often; not only seven Times, but seventy Times seven, yea, an hundred and seventy Times seven, and more. For who shall keep Account of his Brother's Offences till they rise just to seventy Times seven, in order to take the Advantage, and not forgive him upon the four hundred and ninety-first Offence? As for the Computation, that from *Lamech* to *Christ* were seventy Times seven Generations, through which the Vengeance of God extended, till it was completed and fulfilled in the Death and Sacrifice of the *Messiah*; this is rather a Scheme of Curiosity, than any Matter of Certainty: For who will take upon him to reckon the Generations from *Lamech* to *Christ*? From *Lamech* they cannot be reckoned, for his Line determined with the Flood; and from *Seth* they cannot be reckoned, unless we can find out and fix the Correspondence between the Generations of *Lamech* and him; and do suppose, besides, that the Vengeance of *Lamech* was transferred upon the Children of *Seth*. After all,

*The Execution of the Sentence.* 347

upon what Authority can we pretend that the Vengeance of *Lamech* hath any Reference and Conclusion in the Death of *Christ*? The Number seventy Times seven is but once applied to the Messiah, and that is in the Book of *Daniel*, where we read, that seventy Weeks are determined; whether they be Weeks of Years or of Days, the Produce is four hundred ninety Years, or four hundred and ninety Days; Whereas from *Lamech* we must not reckon by Weeks of Days or Years, but of Generations either of an hundred Years, or of any mean Proportion as we can fix it. But reckoning by Generations at an hundred Years will exceed, by ordinary Weeks will fall short, but by Years the Prophecy coincideth exactly with the Times of the Messiah.

Besides, after all the Pains, and Labour, and Toil of those who have travelled sorely, and waded deepest in these dark Researches, it remaineth uncertain whether these Words were spoken by *Lamech* with Reference to his Innocence, or his Guilt: If to his Innocence, then he argueth, if *Cain*, who slew his Brother, shall be avenged seven Times upon him that killeth him; surely *Lamech*, who is guiltless of Blood, shall be avenged seventy Times seven: If to his Guilt, then the Sense will be, that as Vengeance shall be taken seven-fold on *Cain*, Vengeance shall be taken seventy seven-fold on *Lamech*; who, notwithstanding the  
dreadful

## 348 S E R M O N X.

dreadful Example of *Cain*, had committed a double Murder, and *slain a Man to his Wounding, and a young Man to his Hurt*; *Cain*, perhaps, notwithstanding the Mark put upon him; and some other young Man, whose Name also is passed in Silence. And it is likewise to be understood, that the same Vengeance, as, in the Case of *Cain*, shall be taken on him that slayeth *Lamech*, even seventy seven-fold, even the Vengeance which *Lamech* should have undergone. But then this Vengeance; considered as personal to *Lamech*, or to him that should slay him, cannot be extended (as in the Case of *Cain* it might) to so many Generations; and must be understood of the Degrees and Greatness of it: And so indeed it may be said, that this numeral Expression is to be understood with Reference to *Cain* also.

But in Regard to him, I would rather understand the Vengeance that was to be taken on him, and on the Man whomsoever that should slay him, to be fixed and determinate to seven Times, or seven-fold; as seven Times may denote the Duration, and seven-fold the Degrees of that Vengeance. For the Time, it was to last for his Life, or seven hundred Years; for so long we may conclude, from this Passage, as well as from the then common Age of Man, that he lived after he had slain his Brother: For the Degrees of it, it is called seven-fold, with Respect, as some have imagined,

*The Execution of the Sentence.* 349

to the seven Degrees and Aggravations of his Guilt \*. Both have been enumerated, but as this Reference of the one to the other seems rather to be curious, than solid, I shall not descend to the Particulars of the Account in the several Steps and Gradations of the Crime, and the Punishment,

Leaving therefore these and other conjectural Disquisitions which might be raised, I shall only observe further,

1. In the first Place, that from hence we may learn the deep and dreadful Guilt of Murder, whether we look to the Degrees, or Duration of the Vengeance: If *Cain*, who was a Murderer, should be avenged seven Times upon him that should kill him, the seven-fold Vengeance upon *Cain* must be reckoned as the very lowest of his Doom, not equal to what the Murderer deserved, even in this World, but well suited and proportioned to render him a prevailing Example of mighty Influence from the Dread of his Punishment, to deter all others from Blood.

\* The Vengeance is easily distinguished in its several Degrees, and amounts just to seven Steps, or Gradations: 1. The Curse upon the Ground, and the Barrenness that ensued; 2. His Banishment from the Presence of God, and his Brethren, as *Cain* himself expounds that Part of his Sentence. 3. His being a Fugitive and a Vagabond. 4. The Anguish of his Spirit. 5. The trembling of his Limbs. 6. The continual Fear and Apprehension he was under, lest every one that found him should slay him. And, above all, 7. The long Duration of the Time determined for the Execution of this Vengeance upon him seven Times were to pass over him, generally supposed to be 700 Years.

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2. Secondly,

## 350 S E R M O N X.

2. *Secondly*, We may observe, that God having taken the Matter intirely into his own Hands, no Man had any Right, Power, or Authority, to intermeddle with it; and even supposing Man had Authority, it would have been the highest Presumption for him to have interposed, when God had, in so avowed and remarkable a Manner, taken the Cognizance of the Cause to himself: And as external Government was not yet formed, nor any Laws relating to Society as yet enacted, except the conjugal Law rising from the very Manner of Woman's Creation; as no Law was as yet declared against Violence and Blood, I will venture to affirm, that however *Adam*, or any of the Sons of *Adam*, might be incensed, and swell with Indignation and Revenge; however, from the Principles of natural Light or Reason, they might argue that the Blood of *Cain* was but a just Compensation for the Blood of *Abel*; yet, when they saw that God had discovered the Murder and the Murderer, and had arraigned and tried, and condemned the Criminal, especially when they found he did not refer the Cause to their Determination, but had exempted the Malefactor, and fenced him with his own Protection against any Violence they should offer him; no one, who believed in God, and feared to draw the seven-fold Vengeance upon himself, would venture to stretch forth his Hand against him. But thirdly,

3. What



*The Execution of the Sentence.* 351

3. What I have before intimated upon this Subject, I would now beg Leave to insist upon more largely, and to enforce more strongly; namely, that according to our blessed Lord's Declaration, when he stood before *Pilate*, *No Man hath any Power over the Life of another, except it be given him from Above*: And therefore for any Man to have taken away the Life of *Cain*, without a divine Commission, had not been the putting a Malefactor to Death, but committing a Murder, as it is for any unauthorized Person to kill a Criminal, tho' he be condemned: I know in this Case the Law of Nature will be pretended and alledged; but the Law of Nature, unless it be considered as the Will of God, is an empty Name, without any Force or Authority, even upon the Principles of those Men who set up the Law of Nature in Opposition or Contradistinction to the Law of God. For, according to them, by Nature all are equal, there is no Superiority or Dependance of one upon another; but among Equals there can be no Authority; and he that by Nature hath no Power over his own Life, can have none over the Life of another.

Till God signified his Pleasure, Man knew not how to proceed in the Case of Blood; and tho' we acknowledge a Superiority and Dependance in the Relations of Father and Son, and do not absurdly, as they do, put all Men upon a Foot of Equality, which never was, nor can be, the Case of those that are born of a Woman;



Woman; yet we say that *Adam*, by his paternal Relation alone, had not the Power of Life and Death; and he that was instrumental in bringing his Sons into Being, had no Authority upon that Account; nay, it would be unnatural in him to deprive them of it. *Cain* had murdered his Brother; and tho' he apprehended, justly enough, that every one would look upon him as a common Enemy, and kill him, where-ever they found him; yet his Fears were no Argument of their Authority, but only of his own Demerits: He had slain his Brother, not only without Authority, but without Cause; and he imagined, that he had thereby given every one Cause, tho' he knew not that any one had Authority, to kill him: And even while he expresseth his Fears, that every one would kill him, it is an Argument that no one was authorized to slay him. He was subject only to the Vengeance of God, and Man; without his Commission, had invaded his Prerogative, and usurped his Sovereignty; not so much therefore for the Sake of *Cain*, as to assert his own Authority, and to exclude every one from intermeddling in his Vengeance, he denounceth Vengeance against that Man who shall be so daring and presumptuous: He looketh upon him as a Murderer, and as of *Cain* for slaying his Brother, so of that Man who *slayeth Cain, shall Vengeance be taken seven-fold.*

But besides the Vengeance threatened to the Man that should kill him, it pleased God, for

*The Execution of the Sentence.* 353

a further Security and Insurance of his Life, till he had undergone all the divine Vengeance, to set a Mark upon him.

III. Which is the third Consideration, What we are to understand by the Mark, God set upon him.

Concerning this there are several Opinions, and they are but Opinions: The Scriptures being silent, it is in vain for us to think of finding out and determining what the Mark really was.

One Method of Enquiry upon this Subject hath been, to examine those Passages of the Scriptures in After-ages, where any Thing occurreth of any Persons being marked, or having any Mark set upon them: As particularly, that Passage in the ninth Chapter of *Ezekiel* hath been much insisted on, where God commands a Mark to be set upon the Foreheads of all those, that mourn for the Sins and Abominations of the Land. And indeed all the Marks, we read of afterwards, were set in the Forehead, as in the fairest and most conspicuous View.

Accordingly, the most general and best supported Opinion, thus built on similar Passages, seemeth to be, that *Cain* was marked in the Forehead.

And here another Question arises, concerning the Mark itself, which, upon the same Ground, is thought to have been the last Letter

## 354 S E R M O N X.

of the *Hebrew* Alphabet, *נ* *Tbau*. But admitting the Mark to have been in the Forehead, it doth not presently appear what the Kind or Figure of it was. As for the Letter *Tbau*, tho' it was afterwards used for a Mark in the Forehead, by the Direction of God himself; it doth not seem, at this Time, to have had any Being, but in Sound: It was pronounced in Discourse, but not yet described in any Style or Character; for Letters were not yet invented to express the Sound, and the Force of Words. Besides, the Argument from *Ezekiel* turneth rather against this Opinion; for there, as afterwards in the *Revelations*, they were not such as *Cain*, but the true Servants of God, who were thus marked in the Forehead.

If we consider and recollect the other Marks mentioned in the Scriptures, we shall meet with two very significant and expressive: One is the Mark of the Blood drawn from the Paschal Lamb, and *struck upon the two Side-posts and the upper Door-post of the House*, *Exod. xii. 7*. Answerable to this, we may suppose *Cain* to have been marked with Blood on his two Cheeks and his Forehead; and as the Mark was doubtless visible, and to be discerned at a Distance, this certainly would be more legible than one single Letter, tho' as large as the Forehead would receive. I need not say how proper and expressive this Mark of Blood is for a Murderer!

*The Execution of the Sentence.* 355

There is another Mark, and that is of the Leprosy rising in the Forepart of a Head, that is bald, or upon the Forehead: And if we suppose *Cain* to have been overspread with this loathsome Disease, breaking out in a noisome Sore, or Scald, especially upon his Forehead; this, likewise, is a Mark, to make Men look upon him with Abhorrence, and avoid him: Very significant of his hateful Sin, and of his foul and corrupted Blood!

These two I offer as Conjectures, which rose in my Mind, upon a Comparison of the Scriptures in the several Places, where a Mark is mentioned; and if the Mark is supposed to have been in the Face, or Forehead, they are perhaps as probable as any other, that have been advanced.

But besides the Opinion of those, who have supposed the Mark to have been the Letter *Thau* in the Forehead, there is another I meet with, particularly in *St. Chrysostom*; where the most eloquent Preacher maketh the Mark to have been one Part of the Punishment: For whereas the Original truly runneth, *A Fugitive and a Vagabond shalt thou be in the Earth*; the Greek Version, and *St. Jerom*, read, *Thou shalt be*; or (as in our Idiom we may express the Meaning) *thou shalt go groaning and trembling upon the Earth*. Now if, besides that he was a *Fugitive and a Vagabond*, he went also groaning and trembling; groaning for the very Anguish of his Soul, trembling from the Re-

olution or Relaxation of the Sinews over all his Limbs; this is a Mark indeed, and every one must see and observe the Wretch thus mourning and trembling under the avenging Hand of God. It is very probable, that before the Scriptures were translated into *Greek*, the Manner, in which he was affected, was noted down; how he wandered trembling and groaning, at once expressing both the Mark and the Punishment.

Nothing now remaineth, but that we proceed, in the last Place,

IV. To the Execution of the Sentence, expressed and implied in these Words: *And Cain went out from the Presence of the Lord.*

To imagine that by this no more is meant than by *Adam's* being driven, and his going out of Paradise, is the strange uncommon Opinion of a very celebrated Writer about one hundred Years ago; but *Cain* himself, in his own Sense of the Judgment passed upon him, giveth another Interpretation: One Part of his Sentence was, *Thou art cursed from the Earth*; another Part of it was, *A Fugitive and a Vagabond shalt thou be in the Earth*: From both these *Cain*, in repeating the Judgment, inferreth, that he shall be hid from the Presence of God. In this Sense, with Respect to the Curse and the Banishment pronounced upon him, it is said, that *he went out from the Presence of the Lord.*

This



*The Execution of the Sentence.* 357

This was the Execution of the Sentence: He was no longer suffered to stay among his Brethren, but was driven out from that Country, and *from the Presence of the Lord*, and began his Exile, as he was *curst from the Earth*, and condemned to be a *Fugitive and a Vagabond in it*. Adam, when he was driven out of Paradise, was not deprived of the Presence of God; himself and his Children all along enjoyed it, for he was presently, even before he left Paradise, received to Grace and Pardon; and *Cain*, till he slew his Brother, was not excluded: This, as we have seen, was the *Shechinah*, a Manifestation of the divine Glory by the Cherubin and Seraphin, which ever are Attendants on the Majesty of God; and by them he exhibiteth himself in the Eyes of Men: For these are the Symbols of his Presence, and where these appear, there the divine Majesty is more peculiarly known to be. This then was the Presence from which *Cain* was driven, even that Presence before which he stood, when God first expostulated with him before he had slain his Brother; that Presence, before whom now he stood, when God brought him to Trial, and to Judgment, after he had slain him.

*Cain went out*, therefore, *from the Presence of the Lord*, and in this Manner was the Sentence executed: He was driven from the Presence, and by the Tenor of his Sentence he was excommunicated from the Worship of  
God;



## 358 S E R M O N X.

God; he was deprived of the divine Favour, and, as himself apprehended, put out of the divine Protection: He was indeed protected in nothing but his Life, and that was lengthened for Example's Sake, for his greater and more enduring Punishment. I have observed before, that *Cain* was not so sottish, as to think, that he was really out of the Eye and Observation of God; but he saw not any more the Manifestations of the divine Presence, and like these, who in the colder Regions of the Earth are hidden from the Sun, he partaketh no longer of the blessed Influences of Light and Glory. *Cain* here objecteth and lamenteth, that he shall be hid from the Face of God; and in many Places of the Scriptures afterwards God is said to hide his Face, sometimes even from his faithful Servants. Now, whether we be hid from the Face of God, or whether God hideth his Face from us, it is all the same; and, in a figurative and symbolical Sense, it signifieth the withdrawing, for that present, his Favour and his Comforts from us.

And what shall be our Application here? But that we learn, from this terrible Example, not only to abstain from all Blood-guiltiness, but from the most distant Steps, and remotest Approaches towards it; from all Envy, Hatred, and Malice; from Wrath and Revenge; but more especially, that we seek and sue for Pardon at the Throne of Grace, before it be

too late, while yet we are admitted into the Presence of God, and can rejoice and be glad in his Salvation. Let us seek the Things which belong unto our Peace, before they be hidden from our Eyes, and before we, any of us, shall be hidden from the Eyes of God for ever.

And therefore, for a Conclusion of the Whole, let us join devoutly in this fervent Prayer, *Hide thy Face from our Sins, O Lord, and blot out all our Iniquities. Create in us a clean Heart, O God, and renew a right Spirit within us: Cast us not away from thy Presence, and take not thy holy Spirit from us. Amen.*

To God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be Glory for ever. *Amen.*

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